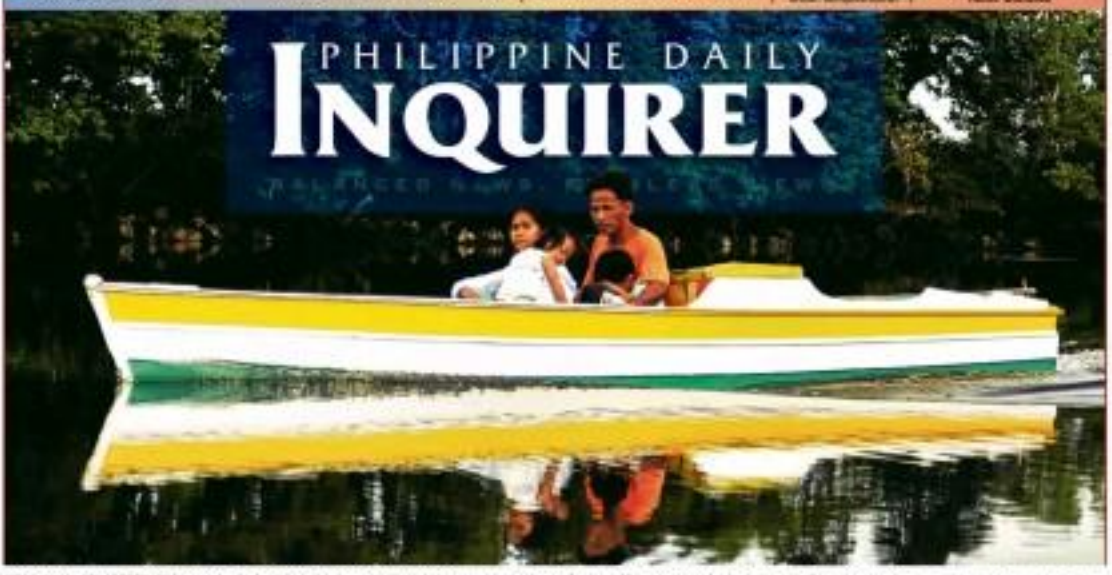
Saturday, March 10, 2012 ★★ 9 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 93 P18 | Mobile Alerts: Text INQ DISTRICT to 4407 | www.inquirer.net, Twitter: @inquirerdotnet

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER



COOL, CALM, COLLECTED This man rakes his family on a slow boat ride through the mangrove-lined coastal waters of Bani, the second to the last town in Pangasinan province.

Defense rules out Basas

Fil-Am girl leaves 'Idol' judge J-Lo speechless

LOS ANGELES—Going "American Idol" contestant Jessica Sanchez took on Whitney Houston's biggest hit on performance night this week, delivering a smooth, effortless rendition that awed the show's judges.

Sanchez, a 16-year-old high school student from San Diego, California, with Mexican and Filipino heritage, gave an assured version of "I Will Always Love You" that judge Jennifer Lopez found "just amazing. I don't even

ALSO A13

"PRIDE OF BATAAN" The mom of Jessica Sanchez, a last favorite in "AI," hails from Orani, Bataan.

Says prosecution can't present new evidence

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

THE LAWYERS of Chief Justice Renato Corona yesterday said the prosecution cannot present as a rebuttal witness Ana Basa, or any of the Basa relatives of Cristina Corona who have surfaced in various media to allege charges of wrongdoing against the Chief Justice.

A rebuttal only answers "new matters raised by the defense," said lawyer Tranquil Salvador III, the Corona defense panel spokesperson.

This means a rebuttal cannot raise new issues or be used as an opportunity to present new witnesses against an accused, Salvador said.

Besides, the issues raised by Basa, cousin of Cristina, in a two-part interview with the Inquirer on March 6 and 7 were not discussed in the articles of impeachment signed by 188 congressmen that the House of Representatives transmitted to the Senate last December, he said.

"The prosecution can only decide on what to present in its rebuttal after we present our case," Salvador told a news con-

DEFENSE A17

Sister Flory: They can keep money but we want justice / A17

THE ORIGINAL STOCKHOLDER Sister Flory Basa, a 90-year-old Franciscan nun and aunt of the wife of impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona, expresses willingness to testify in the impeachment trial. She is one of the original stockholders of the Basa-Guidote Enterprise Inc., which reportedly lent Corona P11 million.

Gov't drops mining EO, will issue policy

By Kristine L. Alave

THE GOVERNMENT has backtracked on its plan to issue an executive order detailing new mining regulations in consideration of the "diverse" and "very strong views" on the country's extractive industry, several highly placed sources said yesterday.

Instead, the government will release a policy statement on the mining sector that would include certain provisions laid out in the proposed executive order, according to the sources who all

GOV'T A14

Environment, economic execs to revisit mining laws / A16

CJ: Solon's emissary told me to quit

By Jerome Aning

QUIT, or you will be "stripped in public."

This is what an emissary sent by an unnamed senator told Chief Justice Renato Corona a few days after he was impeached by the House of Representatives last December.

Corona revealed this yesterday in interviews with Bombo Radyo Philippines and dzBB radio.

"There's this senator who is sitting as a judge in trial who sent an emissary who told me to resign. I could not believe the message relayed to me, I was shocked. You know what he told me, 'Tell him (Corona) to resign because if not, we will strip you in public,'" the Chief Justice recounted.

Corona did not identify the senator or the emissary. He only said the senator was male and that the emissary had gone to see him at the Supreme Court.

"The senator knows who he is—I'm quoting him verbatim. That's the message relayed to me," Corona said.

"I won't tell you who he is because he might get angrier with me. I just kept quiet about it be-

CHIEF, A17

'Philippine Air Force no more all air, no force'

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

CLARK, Pampanga—The joke about the Philippine Air Force (PAF) is that it is "all air and no force"—and that hurt.

But that may soon be over.

Saying better times are at hand, the PAF's new commanding general, Maj. Gen. Lauro Catalino dela Cruz, yesterday attended the blessing of four of eight Polish

PAF / A13

Newsroom stood still: Gani stopped the presses

By DJ Yap

IN THE SURREAL hush that descended on the Inquirer newsroom on March 2, it seemed that publisher Isagani "Gani" M. Yambot Sr. had all but stopped the presses.

"All of us in the newsroom found out at about the same time last Friday, late afternoon, that Gani was gone. We were all so shocked. We could not focus on our work. We kept trying to concentrate but it took some doing. And it took some time," editor in chief Letty Jimenez-

NEWSROOM A6

Sanchez, PH's 5th cardinal, dies at 91: Prelate of passionate love

By Jocelyn R. Uy

JOSE Cardinal Sanchez, the fifth Filipino to be elevated to the Vatican's College of Cardinals, died early morning Friday at the age of 91. He was to turn 92 on March 17.

The retired prelate, who returned from Rome in 2010 after 25 years to help the Catholic Church fight the controversial reproductive health bill, succumbed to multiple organ failure after a weeklong confinement at Cardinal Santos Memorial Medical Center in San Juan.

His nephew, Manolo Sanchez, disclosed to CBCP-News, the official news service of the Philippine Church hierarchy, that Sanchez had been in

SANCHEZ A11

NEWS

Pinoys upbeat on economy / A2

Ampatuan patriarch rushed to hospital/ A4

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Big miners decry gov't claims on taxes / B1

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

PCSO RESULTS

6/42 LOTTO	31 24 12 21 7 18
4D	8 3 1 1 5 8
6/49 LOTTO	7 9 9 9 6 2 5
MEGA LOTTO 6/45	7 10 29 37 39 40
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LOTTO: 5PM Tues-Sat LOTTO, result to 4PM. PCSO.gov.ph

Pinoys upbeat on economy–SWS

FILIPINOS remain confident that their lives will improve this year and even more heartened about the economy, according to the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey.

The 4th quarter 2011 Social Weather Report, which marks trends in personal quality of life and optimism about the economy, showed that more than a third of adult Filipinos (37 percent) expect their lives to improve in the year ahead, while only 8 percent expect otherwise, for a "high" net personal optimism of plus 29.

The survey, conducted from Dec. 3 to Dec. 7, also showed that 30 percent of Filipinos expect that the economy "will be better" in the year ahead, while 16 percent expect it "will be worse," for a "very high" net economic optimism of plus 14.

Net optimism

Net optimism is the difference between the percentage of optimistic and pessimistic. Net personal optimism scores of plus 20 and above are considered by SWS to be "very high"; plus 10 to plus 19, "high"; plus 1 to plus 9, "moderate"; minus 9 to zero, "low"; and minus 10 and below, "very low."

Net economic optimism scores of plus 14 and above are considered "very high"; plus 1 to plus 9, "high"; minus 9 to zero, "fair"; minus 10 to minus 30, "moderate"; minus 39 to minus 50, "low"; and minus 50 and below, "very low."

Fewer Filipinos, however, said their lives improved over the past year—only 22 percent (gainers) against the 32 percent who said their lives worsened (losers), for a "moderate" net gainers score of minus 10 (gainers minus losers).

Net economic optimism declined in all regions and almost all classes, the SWS said.

Across geographical areas, net personal optimism was "very high" in Metro Manila (plus 35) and Balance Luzon (plus 35); and "high" in Mindanao (plus 22). It was "fair" in the Visayas at plus 17, lower than the plus 34 posted in September 2011.

Very high in ABC

Among socio-economic classes, it was "very high" in class ABC (plus 47) and class D (plus 31). It was "fair" among class E at plus 9, lower than the plus 28 registered in September 2011.

Meanwhile, net economic optimism across geographical areas was "very high" in Metro Manila (plus 31, against the plus 22 in September); Balance Luzon (plus 18, down from plus 37) and Mindanao (plus 14, down from plus 21); while it was "high" in the Visayas (plus 4, down from plus 9).

Net economic optimism was "very high" across socio-economic classes. While the plus 28 score among class ABC was similar to that posted in the previous survey, the net economic optimism score among class D fell to plus 14 from plus 22, and from plus 30 to plus 12 among class E.

The net gainers score was...

...good in Metro Manila (Fleet's minus 8 to minus 1 %), the Visayas (from minus 19 to minus 21) and Balance Luzon (from minus 2 to minus 8). In Mindanao, it was minus 5 (from minus 7 in September).

Across socio-economic classes, the net gainers score from plus 24 to plus 21 among class ABC, but improved from minus 5 to minus 0 among class D, and from minus 29 to minus 24 among class E.

The survey, conducted from Dec. 3 to 7, used face-to-face interviews with 1,200 respondents. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. *Inquirer Research*

Water agency's ads extravagant, says COA

By TJ Burgonio

SPENDING P2 million to advertise its accomplishments to leading newspapers in early 2010 was "extravagant," the Commission on Audit (COA) told the Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA).

State auditors also noted that LWUA spent P5 million more on medical check-ups and hospitalization for its executives was unauthorized, while P30 million was spent on water quality monitoring equipment that was unused.

To crush its recurrent ire, in February 2010, LWUA ran an accomplishment report in leading newspapers at a cost of P1.784 million, and a special cover feature in the Philippine Free Press for P250,000, and sponsored the production and airing of the Philippine Women's Basketball League (PWBL) on Solar Basketball TV for P500,000.

The newspaper and TV advertisements were unnecessary "as the nature of LWUA's mission would not warrant such exposure," the COA said in its 2010 audit report.

State auditors recommended that LWUA strictly adhere to COA Circular 85-55A, which states that advertisement of anniversaries merely for publicity are unnecessary except when they promote trade or business.

"LWUA should institute and control Public Information Expenses to be incurred in order to maximize, if not prevent, wasteful, excessive and unnecessary expenses," they said.

LWUA managers had explained that newspaper advertisements were meant to highlight the agency's vital role in the water supply sector, while the sponsorships of PWBL on TV was in support of the government program for youth, sports and physical fitness development.

Created in 1973, the LWUA is a specialized lending institution "in the sector of water supply, sewerage and sanitation" to promote, develop and finance local water utilities.

In the same report, COA questioned why the agency continued to grant executive clean-up and hospitalization to its board of trustees, officials and employees in the amount of P1.9 million in 2010 even though this had been disapproved by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM).

In its 2010 budget, the DBM disapproved LWUA's P1.8-million budget for executive check-ups for lack of legal basis. Despite this, the agency has continued to grant reimbursements for hospital medical expenses amounting to P439,250.77.

COA said this should be discontinued unless DBM-approved from the DBM.

COA also noted that some 35 units of water quality monitoring equipment worth P38 million were not used by water districts.

'GLEE' ACTOR Darren Criss accepts, on behalf of Unicef Philippines, a check for $25,000 from Dr. Aida Takla-O'Reilly, president of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, as InfoNIS correspondent and columnist Ruben Nepales, HFPA board member, looks on.

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Hollywood scribes pitch in for victims of 'Sendong'

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE HOLLYWOOD Foreign Press Association, (HFPA) on Thursday (Friday morning in Manila) donated a check worth $25,000 to the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) Philippines to help in the long-term recovery programs for children affected by tropical storm "Sendong" in Mindanao.

Accepting the check in Los Angeles on behalf of Unicef Philippines was "Glee" actor Darren Criss, whose mother is a native of Cebu.

The HFPA, a nonprofit association of international journalists who come up and present the annual Golden Globe Awards, announced the donation through a statement by its president, Dr. Aida Takla-O'Reilly. "As an association, we aim to give a speech recognize to new talented filmmakers around the world. This donation to Unicef Philippines will help toward long-term efforts dedicated to children affected by the storm."

Through the years, the HFPA has donated more than $2.5 million to entertainment related charities, schools, film preservation programs and to relief efforts during devastating international disasters, including the earthquakes in Haiti and Chile and the tsunami in Japan last year.

First for PH

However, this was the first time that the association donated funds to help survivors of a disaster in the Philippines, said Inquirer.net entertainment columnist Ruben Nepales, who also sits on the HFPA board of directors.

Nepales, the first Filipino member of the HFPA, said he was "truly grateful to the members for their generosity."

He recalled: "We were in the midst of preparing for this year's Golden Globe awards when Sendong devastated Mindanao, reportedly [the cities of] Iligan and Cagayan de Oro. I was really distressed to learn about how entire villages were wiped out, killing more than 1,200 people and leaving tens of thousands homeless. News reports of children clinging on trees for dear life to avoid being carried away by the sudden floods, moved me, as did stories of many children being separated from their families."

Nepales said he appealed to his fellow HFPA board members during a meeting and the board "generously approved a donation, which was presented to the membership for approval. [It] [w]hen members unanimously voted on a $25,000 donation."

Unicef Philippines

HFPA donations, explained Nepales, are made possible by the income derived from telecast rights to the Golden Globe Awards every January. He added that the HFPA chose to send the donation through Unicef Philippines "because of the organization and its projects are especially geared toward helping the children victims and their families."

Unicef Philippines implements programs on education, health and nutrition, HIV and AIDS prevention, child protection, communication and social policy and institutional development. Its goal is to provide the best quality of life for every Filipino child.

Nepales added that the HFPA thought it was "appropriate" for Criss—best known for portraying Blaine Anderson in the Fox TV series "Glee"—to accept the donation on behalf of Unicef Philippines because "he's a talent of Filipino heritage."

"Criss agreed to accept the check right away," said Nepales, whose column "Only in Hollywood" comes out thrice weekly in the Inquirer Entertainment section. "We thank him for taking the time out to do it despite his tight shooting schedule for 'Glee.'"

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Ampatuan patriarch taken to hospital

By DJ Yap

THE PATRIARCH of the Ampatuan clan charged with the 2009 massacre of 57 persons, including 31 journalists, in Maguindanao province, was rushed to a hospital yesterday after vomiting blood, officials said.

Former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan, Sr., who is detained with other family members at the Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City, was brought to the Taguig Pateros District Hospital at past noon, the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) said.

Security was tight as a convoy of several vehicles and more than 10 jail security officers accompanied Ampatuan to the hospital.

Reports from the Philippine National Police and the BJMP indicated that he had been vomiting blood, prompting jail officers to bring him to the hospital.

In a telephone interview, BJMP Director Fernando Diaz said Ampatuan had been suffering from a host of ailments, such as hypertension and diabetes.

Recovering

"Actually, he's been ill for some time, but he was just confined in the hospital. He was just recovering in the BJMP infirmary, but this morning, he started vomiting blood," he said.

Diaz said Ampatuan also exhibited signs of fever and had difficulty breathing.

"So he was taken to the hospital for emergency checkup and laboratory exams," he added.

Diaz said the doctor in the infirmary had recommended Ampatuan's transfer to the hospital. "Anyway, we have informed the court, the prosecution, and the defense," he said.

Ampatuan was later transferred to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Medical Center (formerly V. Luna Medical) in Quezon City.

Senior Sup. John Grace Bonifio, warden of the Quezon City Jail Annex in Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig, said that Ampatuan left the Taguig Pateros District Hospital at around 2:45 p.m.

"The jail staff accompanying him said there was insufficient equipment at the Taguig Pateros Hospital to treat him," Bonifio said in a phone interview.

A doctor from the Taguig hospital accompanied Ampatuan's convoy as it headed off for AFP-PMC.

Ampatuan lawyers have asked a Quezon City court to allow him to be treated at the AFP-PMC.

No order

"It was advised that the patient be moved to a tertiary hospital for proper treatment," their two-page urgent motion said.

The staff of Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes of Regional Trial Court Branch 221 received the urgent motion filed by Gregorio Ilagan and Joy Musong at 4:40 p.m. yesterday.

But the court did not issue any order on the urgent motion yesterday afternoon as the pleading will be discussed in next week's hearing.

Ampatuan was admitted for checkup and observation at the AFPMC yesterday afternoon even without a court order, the spokesperson of the military hospital said.

"Right now his condition is being observed in order not any sickness or illness. He's being checked. But he'll stay longer for observation," Col. Jerome Ochoco, AFP Medical Center public affairs office chief, said in a phone interview.

"We have not settled whether he will be confined. We're doing some tests right now," he added.

Ochoco said they have not received any order under sec. Ampatuan's custody.

Several members of the Ampatuan clan, including Andal Jr. and his sons, are the principal suspects in the November 2009 massacre in Ampatuan town in Maguindanao.

Twenty-six of the reported 58th victim, photojournalist Reynaldo Momay, remains missing.

Missing witness

As this developed, a private prosecutor expressed alarm over a prosecution witness in the Maguindanao massacre who has been missing for a week.

Lawyer Nena Santos, counsel for Maguindanao Gov. Esmael Mangudadatu, said that former Amil Ewog might have been murdered as his family has not heard from him.

"We received reports from the family that he last made contact with them over a week ago. Since then nobody's been in Maguindanao, we are expecting the worst," she said in a phone interview.

Ewog is a former militiaman who testified in court that he drove 36 militiamen from Nov. 22 to 23 to Ampatuan's residence.

Maguindanao province.

Santos said Ewog is not among the accused as he had no participation in the massacre.

She said that Ewog's brother, Pakiam, who is one of the accused in the case, said the witness was nowhere to be found.

With reports from Dennis F. Pernihagan, Montsumi S. Abellanosa and Julie M. Aurelio

IGOT 3 PINK, JOURNEY! For new first, pro-human Mike Arroyo leads the pall bearers as the coffin of his younger brother, Negros Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, is carried from the Arroyos' ancestral home in Quezon City for burial yesterday. YOSHIKO NISHIMURA

Iggy laid to rest, finally

By Jeannette I. Andrade

NEGROS Occidental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo was finally laid to rest yesterday afternoon in the family mausoleum at the Manila North Cemetery.

The interment yesterday at the Tinsan-Arroyo mausoleum at the corner of Main Avenue and 20th Street of the Manila North Cemetery was the two women in Arroyo's life: estranged wife Gloria Arroyo and his longtime partner Grace Duma, observing the solemn rites several years apart.

Both women were seated on the front row, where the white folding chairs were arranged so that they were separated by an aisle. Each of the seats many from Iggy's family, Cong. Mikey Arroyo.

While Gloria grieved quietly, a very emotional Duma openly wept even as hugged the closed Iggy's bronze coffin as she lovingly cradled his head when it was time for family members to say goodbye.

As the Philippine flag was taken from the coffin, each everyone standing for the honors, the folded flag was handed over to Aleli who in turn passed it on to her daughter Bianca. The flag was already with Bianca when Duma approached her to hold the flag.

As the last shot was fired from the traditional gun salute, Duma fell back to her seat her knees seemingly giving in under her.

At around 3:40 p.m., the late Negros Occidental 5th district representative's remains were placed inside the grave across his mother Ma. Loudes Arroyo's burial site and beside one of his uncles, Fr. Pilar Rosete.

A staff of the Arroyos told the inquirer that the original plan was to bury Iggy beside his mother but for some reason they were told to leave the body on the grave across hers instead.

Butterflies were freed after the interment as a symbol of freedom and the beginning of a new journey.

PNR adds more train trips to Bicol

THE PHILIPPINE National Railways (PNR) has announced it will make available additional trips to Bicol starting next month in line with state efforts to improve commuting between Metro Manila and key provinces.

Aside from the additional trips every week, the PNR management also announced the extension of the train line's route from Naga, the current destination, to Legazpi, Ligao, and Tabaco in Albay.

The two new services, called the Mayon Limited Dr. Jose and the Mayon Limited Ordinary will kick off next week. The MLD will run every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, while the MLO will run every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday.

These additional services will depart from the PNR's Tutuban station at 4:30 p.m., after the daily Bicol Express which departs at 6:30 p.m. The new train services arrive 5:45 a.m. in Naga City, 6:00 a.m. in Polangui and 7:00 a.m. in Ligao, Albay, the next day.

The one-way fare for the Mayon Limited Dr. Luis is P736.00 for Naga and P760.00 for Ligao, while that for the Mayon Limited Ordinary is P624.00 and P644.00 for Naga and Ligao respectively.

The additional trains will have different configurations: the MLD will have three air-conditioned coaches, all of which are fitted with executive reclining seats, while the MLO will have two coaches fitted with electric fan-reclined coaches and fixed reclining seats. Paolo G. Montecillo

2 Church bells taken as war booty returned

FOREIGN Affairs Secretary Albert Del Rosario yesterday turned over to the National Museum a Philippine-American war artifact consisting of two church bells reportedly taken by Americans from Sta. Isabel church in Mayorasgan, Balangiga, in 1899.

The two bells are contained by a steel block of black wood with a handle on top.

An inscription attached to the wooden block of the bells reads, "Taken from the Church at BALANGIGAN, Samar, (by) Manila after bombardment by Gen. Smith March 20, 1899. By PO Thomas, Co. A Battalion of Engineers."

The artifact is approximately 30 inches long on each side and about 23 inches wide. It is estimated to weigh five pounds.

The church bells were said to have been taken by American soldiers from a church in Mayorasgan, Balangiga, in the height of the war between Filipino guerillas and the occupying American forces.

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), archivist Master Sheffler of the Sisters of Mercy in Omaha, Nebraska, found the artifact in July 2011 among a set of properties that were originally in the possession of the Sisters of Mercy convent in Red Bluff, California.

It was not known who gave the bells to the said convent, but Sheffler said that perhaps a small missionary or a family could have turned it over to the convent after noting that they were church bells, the DFA added.

On Oct. 6, 2011, Sisters of Mercy Midwest Community USA president Sister Judith Fridley handed over the bells in Philippine Consul General to Chicago Leo Herrera-Lim. Tracy Sontos

In arraignment deal, Erap pal pleads not guilty

By TJ Burgonio

MANDAUE/MANILA (Inter-Aksyon) — Ramon Dichaves was arraigned yesterday but pleaded not guilty to plunder charges before the Sandiganbayan during a hearing on his motion to travel to Hong Kong and China later this month.

With the arraignment, the Sandiganbayan Special Division has acquired jurisdiction over Dichaves and could proceed with his trial even in his absence should he not return to the country, a court staff said. His lawyer, however, said he had no intention of doing so.

Dichaves is a reservist of former President Joseph Estrada in the plunder case. Erap has denied conspiring with the former board to amass ill-gotten wealth.

The arraignment was necessary for Dichaves' travel abroad. He had filed a motion and a supplemental motion for leave to travel to Hong Kong and Shenzhen, China, from March 16 to 26. But this was opposed by state prosecutors.

The Special Division, chaired by Associate Justice Francisco Villarama Jr., informed Dichaves of the conditions of his arraignment, including the waiving of his right to invoke double jeopardy, to which he later consented.

"He will not be able to invoke the defense of double jeopardy in case something happens," his counsel Ducilyn Aguilar-Jaurigue said in an interview, referring to the principle that an accused can't be charged twice for the same offense.

The other conditions were: should the prosecution resolve to proceed with the case after reinvestigation, the conditional arraignment will stand as a regular arraignment, and should the prosecution resolve to withdraw the information under which he was conditionally arraigned, such conditional arraignment shall be unconditionally nullified.

The court ordered the prosecution to submit its opposition to Dichaves' motion and the defense to file its comment before the March 16 hearing.

A hold-departure order has been issued against Dichaves. He has not been arraigned on the plunder case after the Special Division ordered the Office of the Ombudsman to first complete its preliminary investigation of the case.

The court has also quashed his arrest warrant but has not lifted the HDO against him.

Bigtime perks sought for 'Iglesia' centennial

By Gil Cabacungan

TWO ALLIES of President Aquino want the government to go all out in providing the best perks for Iglesia Ni Cristo on its centennial celebration in 2014 by requiring airlines to give members discounts on tickets, putting up special express lanes for members in airports, and forming a government commission to be headed by non-Cabinet officials.

"Considering the global scale of the occasion, it is projected that a celebration unprecedented in scope will mark the undertaking, Taking into account that the Philippines is the seat of the Church and is the center of the centennial celebration, the influx of Cristohanon expected to number in Philippine history is anticipated," said Quezon City Representative Winston Castelo and Jorge "Bolet" Banal said in one of three resolutions for INC's centennial on July 27, 2014. INC's central temple is in Quezon City.

In House Resolution 2327, Castelo and Banal urged Malacañang to form the INC Centennial commission which would oversee and coordinate with the leadership of the religious group preparations and activities for the said event and "providing funds therefor."

The two also filed resolution 2102 urging both domestic and international airlines to extend special airfare discounts to all INC members flying into the country for the centennial. Castelo and Banal did not say how Congress would be able to compel private companies to give discounts based on religious affiliations.

The third resolution (HR 2326) asking the Bureau of Immigration and the Bureau of Customs to establish a "centennial lane" for INC members at the international airport for "practical and convenience purposes" for the "throng of INC members flying in."

The INC centennial bills were apparently filed to woo the INC leaders amid strained relations with the Aquino administration.

Gani's remains cremated

By Nancy Carvajal

ST. BENEDICT rites crowned with the release of bronze and black butterflies, family and friends remember Isabel Caruncho in Philippine Daily Inquirer publisher Isagani M. Yambot Sr.

Yambot's remains were cremated after a simple and affirmation ceremony at the Arlington Memorial Chapels in Quezon City.

"He was the best man for the job," was how Inquirer founding chair Eugenia Apostol described Yambot when the appointed him publisher 10 years ago.

Apostol described Yambot as "down the old school" and said: "He will be hard to replace."

"Thank you, boss, I will miss you," Yambot's longtime secretary, Pedro Gonzaga, said before his body was cremated.

10 commandments

Isagani Jr. summed it up for his siblings when he said: "We are proud of you, Dad. It's a blessing to be your child."

Yambot's eldest granddaughter, Joanne, recalled that her grandfather gave her a letter before she left for Mexico to work in a hotel three late year. She said he told her to share his letter with his other grandchildren and their children.

"It was my Lola's 10 commandments for me because he did not want me to work abroad, but when he handed it to me he told me to share it with my cousins and our children," Joanne said.

In a statement, the Yambot family thanked those who came to his wake and said: "Your presence...helped lighten our burden."

"We appreciate very much you taking the time to come and share in the remembrance of Gani. Although this is a sad time for all of us, we find comfort in knowing how fortunate that we have known you."

Newsroom stood still

From page A1

Magsanoc recalled.

"That's why the first edition of the Inquirer has Saturday never out at 10:14 p.m. [until past the deadline of 8:30 p.m.]. The second edition was finished at 11:30, a round of noise in the newsroom of the Inquirer's deadline compliance," she said in laughter.

"That's how affected the newsroom was by the passing of Gani," Magsanoc said in her tribute to Yambot on Thursday night in the packed Arlington Memorial Chapels in Quezon City whose dozens of Inquirers executives and editors and hundreds of staffers, reporters, employees and friends paid him their last respects.

That night, the Inquirer gave an affectionate, emotional send-off to the man affectionately described in valedictories as the "voice of the Inquirer," a gentleman, a journalist's journalist, a press freedom fighter, a grammar cop, and a "lover of all creatures bright and beautiful."

'He was truly loved'

By turns touching and joyful, "the Philippine Daily Inquirer night" culminated a wedding series of fond remembrances for Yambot, who succumbed to a heart attack 10 days after undergoing a quadruple heart bypass. He was 73.

And just as the late publisher would have liked it, there was plenty of food and a lot of songs, courtesy of classical soprano singers and the Inquirer's own choral group, the Inq Chorus.

Inquirer president Alexandra "Sandy" Prieto-Romualdez said: "I think you can see from the turnout tonight that Gani was truly loved. There are people here whom I haven't seen for 20 years . . . Gani was truly loved by us."

Romualdez announced, in behalf of Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto, who was also present, that the Inquirer would be renaming the schooling of at least one scholar in Yambot's name.

"We're calling it the ISP Scholar," she said in cheers.

Tears, too

During a break in the program, old photos of Yambot were flashed on a screen drawing the many facets of his life at the Inquirer—behind a desk, at a party, speaking at a formal function or in a street rally.

As somber music played in the background, some of the family members and others in the audience wept.

But there was instant comic relief, too, as when the screen flashed a picture of the publisher in the company of beautiful celebrities, such as one of him shaking hands with popular actress Angel Locsin, and another where he was wrapped in an embrace with sexy star Patricia Javier. Another photo showed him with girls in angel costumes.

Positive energy

In her tribute, Romualdez spoke of Yambot's positivity and humor, and of being a stickler for grammar.

"I see him weekly in our corona (executive committee meeting). He was always in a positive mode, except when he goes through the notes of the newsroom meeting. He has great frustration when there's a lot of gender-benders," Romualdez said.

"And when the attendance in his morning sessions is a little low, he'd ask, don't you have anything there to tickle off?" she said, alluding chuckles from the audience.

"That's how I want to remember Gani—that he was always in a positive energy. And always we gamit with seeing people outside together, never wanting to confront, never wanting to disturb. That one I want to keep in my memory of him," she said, wiping away her tears.

Romualdez's emotional words later prompted Yambot's brother Efren to remark: "I've been in the corporate world, retired eight years ago. I have worked with presidents and CEOs and this is the first time I have seen a president shed tears like a Dalton cousin. I salute your president and CEO."

Defending press freedom

Managing editor Jose Ma. Nolasco talked about Yambot's "shining moment" in the Inquirer editor, he served as its spokesperson in 1999 when the paper suffered its greatest crisis, a five-month advertising boycott launched by then President Joseph Estrada.

"Although Gani was not out out as a public speaker, he spoke in numerous interviews and talk shows to explain the Inquirer's side in the face of Malacañang's incessant charges against the Inquirer that we had been irresponsible and malicious in our reporting," Nolasco said.

"Instead of spending late evenings with his colleagues we were—he's in Malate . . . Gani engaged various mass communication mediums in some campaigns explaining the importance of press freedom deep to its depths," he said.

"Never have I seen a publisher who was a mass force as this one. I was in my University of the Philippines days," Nolasco said.

'Gentle soul'

Magsanoc said the Inquirer cooked up a "secret formula" to counter the boycott.

"The Inquirer's strength is formulated by family and the editorial group led by Gani, was something like this: Jose give them the facts, guys. Stick to the truth, and stick to our guns. And the business prevailed in a large part due to Gani's relentless love for country and his quiet way

AMBASSADOR'S CALL

Iranian Ambassador to the Philippines Ali Asghar Mohammadi receives a copy of the book "Hiway to Heyway: 25 Years of the Philippine Daily Inquirer" from Inquirer Chair Marixi Prieto as Inquirer president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez looks on. The ambassador visited the Inquirer office in Makati yesterday.

More Taal fishkills seen as lake heats up

By Kristine L. Alave

AS THE SUMMER heat reaches its peak, Taal Lake fishermen should be prepared for possible fishkill due to temperature changes, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) has warned.

BFAR director Asis G. Perez yesterday reminded about 300 fisherfolk who attended the Taal Lake Fisheries Stakeholders Forum to harvest their fish early if they see incidences of possible lake reversion, sulphur upwelling, lowering of dissolved oxygen and possible fish parasite infestation.

Perez said fisherfolk should watch for physical abnormalities in their catch as well as reduction of gas bubbles in the lake that would be a sign of carbon dioxide emission. They should also watch out for any discoloration of the lake waters which could indicate sulphur upwelling, he added.

"These naturally occurring phenomena are usually affected by temperature changes especially in the months of April to June and during the rainy months when typhoons occur," he said.

Perez urged Taal Lake fisherfolk to follow sustainable fish farming practices so as not to compromise the health of the lake's waters, an important source of food for Metro Manila and South Luzon. BFAR said the lake provides fish mostly farmed tilapia and milkfish to as many as 1.6 million Metro residents. Fish catch from its open waters feeds some 200,000 people who rank commerce at least ₱944 for of fish a year, BFAR said.

Overcrowding

To avoid a repeat of the massive fishkill in Taal Lake last year, Perez appealed to the Taal Lake Aquaculture Alliance, Inc. and local officers to police their ranks and to comply with the guidelines embodied in the Taal Volcano Protected Landscape Management Plan of 2009.

"The overcrowding of fish cages, overfeeding, and the willful disregard of the prescribed fish cage size have been found as major causes of serious oxygen depletion resulting in fishkills," Perez said.

Taal fishermen last year suffered huge losses from fishkills that occurred from May to June. According to the BFAR, the phenomenon affected more than 2,000 tons of farmed fish with damages pegged at ₱144.3 million.

Subsequent investigation also showed that the lake was teeming with illegal fish cages. The agency said it detected 560 over 7000 illegally-operated fish cages in compliance with the municipally-determined environmental limit of only 6,000 fish cages in the entire lake.

Awareness campaign

This year, Perez said, the BFAR is conducting an awareness campaign to remind fish operators of the dangers of overstocking fish farming methods. The BFAR will also provide technical and regulatory support to municipal governments in realigning and rezoning fish cages. The agency, he said, will monitor as well the water quality of the lake and patrol its waters.

Perez said they will hire additional manpower and deploy at least two patrol boats in the area to help increase the compliance of fish cage operators to the Management Plan. Of importance are the prescribed limits for fish cages sizes of 10 m × 10 m × 6 m, the stocking densities and installing inlets," he added.

Agriculture Secretary Proceso Alcala meanwhile directed all heads of his department to be more proactive in addressing the impact of climate change on agriculture. Subsequently, he noted that the present administration puts a high priority on the need to provide enough food for the country's growing population while promoting the livelihood of small farmers and fishermen.

Across the NATION

Coal plant project 'not done deal'

By Robert Gonzaga
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—Heeding the sentiments of stakeholders, officials of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) said the construction of a 600-megawatt coal-fired power plant here was no longer "a done deal."

SBMA Chair Roberto Garcia said the community and the key stakeholders, who participated in an consultation process last year, "rejected it unanimously."

The results of the social responsibility process (SRP) for the project were submitted to President Aquino this week.

SBMA officials also said they have been reviewing its contract with SP Energy Inc. (SPEI), the consortium composed of Alsthom Power, Mitsubishi Electric Co. and Taiwan Cogen Corp., which is constructing and managing the plant.

'Disadvantageous'

In its present form, the contract approved earlier by the previous SBMA board of directors was "highly disadvantageous to the government," Garcia said.

"We are questioning [the project] on economic terms because [SPEI] is only going to pay SBMA P1 million a year, and there's not right, it would cost more to rent an apartment in Manila," he said. a room roundtable discussion with business others.

SBMA and SPEI have been renegotiating those terms for six months, but "up to now, there's no give on a figure," he said. "As far as we are concerned, there is no limits to go forward [with negotiations]," he said.

In recent consultations the agency held since the country last year, Garcia said the benefits of the Subic plant over the next grid.

But Garcia said the SBMA "has no wants to protect the environment."

The SRP was conducted from June 7 to 9. But SPEI representatives did not participate in the GAF.

The SBMA report given to the deputies noted "a clear rejection of the coal-fired [power plant] project," and said environmental experts had found the SPEI environmental impact statements mostly "deficient."

Garcia, however, said the proponents could still submit clearances to establish why a coal-fired plant would be reasonable inside the free port.

"If there are mitigating measures [to the damage the coal plant will cause] and if they will say that it can be done, [SBMA should] process that also," he said.

SBMA Director Philip Cannon, who told the SAR said the members of the consultation "will be adopted by the board, with the effect that these concerns of various stakeholders [would] remain a factor should SP Energy proceeds to fulfill its requirements], if they want to pursue the project."

For the board, the results of the ASEP means Philippine clean air standards are not enough to fulfill the environmental requirements of the SBMA master plan, Cannon said.

He said the more environment standards "are not sufficient to prevent air pollution, [which] is the global standard. Under the law [Republic Act No. 7227], SBMA can adopt standards and regulations in excess of the, which become a subsidiary of the Aseo-Italian company Agusta Westland in 2008. The contract obliges the supplier to provide training and support for pilots who will fly these new aircraft.

COOL KIDS! Summer brings festivals everywhere, including in Bugas, which hosts an annual feast in March, when boys and young men spring out of their homes in traditional gear for river-side games or a series of fun events to relieve themselves of the summer heat.

PAF gets 4 combat helicopters

CLARK FIELD, Pampanga—If the old Huey helicopters being used by the Philippine Air Force (PAF) for nearly half a century are comparable to Army jeeps, then the country's newly acquired Polish-made helicopters are not equivalent to modern cars.

This was the analogy given by Maj. Randy Buenia, a helicopter pilot, when he described the speed, comfort and reduced flight vibration of a W-3A Sokol helicopter manufactured by Poland-based PZL-Swidnik SA.

The PAF formally received four of the eight Polish-made combat utility helicopters at a turnover ceremony at the Air Force City on Friday.

The eight W-3A Sokol helicopters are part of the P5.9-billion acquisition contract between the DND and PZL-Swidnik SA, which became a subsidiary of the Anglo-Italian company Agusta Westland in 2008. The contract obliges the supplier to provide training and support for pilots who will fly these new aircraft.

Advantage

"If the Huey is an owner-type jeep, the [older] ones are. What the Huey can do, the [older] can also do. But the Huey cannot do all what the Sokol can do. This helicopter has more advantage than the Huey. It has two engines, unlike the Huey ... So if one engine fails in the air, we can still fly and safely land it with the second engine," said Buenia, a pilot assigned to the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing.

PAF spokesperson Lt. Col. Miguel Ernesto Okol said the helicopters help fulfill the first phase of the PAF upgrade as prescribed by Republic Act No. 7898, the Armed Forces of the Philippines Modernization Act of 1995.

The first phase of the PAF modernization program obliges the government to acquire eight combat utility helicopters, seven attack helicopters, a C-130 cargo aircraft, a long-range (patrol) aircraft, and 18 basic trainer airplanes.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said the helicopters "will bolster the capability and firepower of the Air Force." He described the Polish-made helicopters as a good choice for the Armed Forces due to their "proven effectiveness and ruggedness under any conditions."

"We must be contented with what we can afford with our limited resources," he said.

The first batch of the helicopters was delivered here on Feb. 14 via a Ukraine-made Antonov An-124 Ruslan, one of the biggest transport aircrafts in the world. For the last two months, PAF pilots have been flying the massive aircraft.

The four remaining W-3A Sokol helicopters are expected to be received by the PAF by October or November.

Supplier

In September 2010, the DND signed PZL-Swidnik SA to supply the country with seven Pw-3 Sokol "Medevac" attack helicopters at P5.2 billion, but the purchase deal was suspended by President Aquino due to some irregularities.

When asked, Okol said the Palace supply program is ongoing, although the contract terms raised by Malacañang are still with the Department of National Defense.

The twin-engine helicopter has been certified by the European Aviation Safety Agency and the Federal Aviation Administration. Each helicopter can carry two pilots and 12 passengers and up to 3,100 kilograms of cargo. It may be used in sea and mountain rescue operations. —Jon Malig, Inquirer Central Luzon

NEWSBRIEFS

CEBU CITY

Fire displaces 300 families

MORE than 300 families were left homeless on Friday when fire destroyed more than 100 houses in densely populated Sitio Ampia Subd.

Three persons were reported injured as the blaze created panic among the residents who were either preparing or eating their breakfast when the fire of still-unknown origin broke out from the house of Nolan Tabacal at 7:10 a.m. The fire quickly spread as most of the houses were made of light materials.

Cebu Barangay Captain Rogelio Rosario Lucar said 147 houses were destroyed in the fire in Block 1 and Block 2 Chimney Site. Others walls located between Belgium and General Climo Streets.

The Cebu City fire department, however, reported that only 95 houses were destroyed while 11 houses were damaged. The victims were relocated to the barangay sports complex and the Fiesta Inn port. —Jhunnex Napallacan, Inquirer Visayas

MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL

Army exec slain

AN ARMY officer was killed in a firefight between government forces and suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels in Aloran, Occidental on Tuesday.

Capt. Raylan Jana, spokesperson of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, said 2nd Lt. Jose Angelo Baguinia of the 57th Infantry Battalion was brought to the hospital but was pronounced dead on arrival.

The soldier was on their way to Barangay Basak in Sinacaban town to conduct peace and development works at 11:45 a.m. when their upcoming attack in Sitio Mantapoy, Barangay Tapon, Sinacaban. —Zaraniel Mahon, Inquirer Visayas

CAVITE

Man runs amuck, 6 hurt

SIX PERSONS, among them children, were hurt after a drunken man ran amuck in Dasmariñas City on Wednesday evening, the police on Thursday said.

Police were tracking down the escaped Alden Bolivar, 38, who hurled indiscriminately fired an improvised shotgun, hurting six members of a family in Barangay Sitio Manis, said city police chief Supt. Romeo Cruz.

Bolivar and Arnaldo Mendoza, 42, were at the latter's home drinking until they argued and got into a verbal fight. He said Bolivar went home and returned shortly with a shotgun. Bolivar fired several other shots, hurting Arnaldo and four other people in the house. —Marlowe Clores, Inquirer Southern Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO

Wall collapse hurts workers

SEVEN workers were injured when the fifth floor of a mall they were constructing collapsed on March 9, said city administrator Fernando Caplan. The accident occurred hours after workers poured concrete on the nine columns of the future SM Cassandra's fifth level flooring. "It happened between 12:15 and 12:20 noon when the workers were outside eating. It was in their direction that the concrete floor fell," said Caplan.

Building contractor RC Cleroux Construction, in a statement, said it was the frame of a 10-meter beam which collapsed while concrete was being poured at the site. The contractor said its workers' injuries were minor, and damage to the site was minimal. —Rosario Cirque, Inquirer Central Luzon

3 suspects in UPLB student killing heard

By Marlowe Clores
Inquirer Southern Luzon

CAMP BGEN MACARIOSTA, Laguna—All the suspects in the murder of University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) student Ray Bernard Peñaranda are now in the hands of the police.

Chief Supt. James Melad, regional police director in Calabarzon, confirmed the arrest of Carl Daniel" de Guzman, 27, before 2 p.m. on Friday in Daraga, Albay. Earlier, police were looking at his relatives' home in Barangay Bigte.

De Guzman was the third suspect in fall, following the nationwide on Thursday night of Reynes Kennedy "Rekin, 19, co-broadcaster Rolly "Bill-oard Philippine National Police Director General Marianito Roque.

Rekin, the one who allegedly stabbed Peñaranda in the chest, was now held at the detention cell of the Laguna police office in Sta. Cruz town, said Laguna police director Senior Supt. Gilbert Cruz on Friday.

De Guzman, who allegedly drove the suspects' motorcycle, would be turned over to the Daraga police in the Laguna police office by Friday night, said Albay police director Supt. William Macaraeg.

Nelson and De Guzman were arrested by combined Isidoro Joseph Beltran, who earlier surrendered to the police.

All three suspects were listed robbery with homicide charges as town in Calamba City and Cruz.

Peñaranda, 19, UPLB agricultural engineering student, was killed in a failed holdup as he and two other students were walking home in their dormitory in Brgy. Malitlit at 1:30 a.m. on Tuesday.

His death sparked an outcry in the UPLB community as it happened less than a week after high school student Football Generals of Los Baños National High School was raped and murdered in the same area.

The killings also prompted the relief of the town's police force.

With a report from Jhar Arguelles, Inquirer Southern Luzon

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INQUIRER Visayas

Roxas' prized shellfish makes a comeback

THE DIWAL industry provides livelihood to coastal residents of Roxas City, Capiz.

By Noone F. Burgos Jr.
Roxas City

TWO DECADES ago, Roxas City in Capiz almost lost its prized shellfish "diwal" due to overharvesting. Only the thorough comprehensive rehabilitation program in 1997 saved the bivalve from near extinction.

Mon, diwal, also known as "angel wings," is one of the tourist-drawers of the city and the much-sought-after delicacy is partly responsible for its recognition as the country's "seafood capital."

Measuring 3 to 5 inches, the shellfish are mostly found in Barangays Baras, Libas, Cogon and Punta Cogon, growing at a water depth of 20 to 25 feet; life to seven months from spawning. diwal harvest the diwal, using imported gears.

Prices of diwal range from P150 to P360 per kilogram, depending on P800 to P1,000 per kg during the peak harvest season when the shell, fish are brought to restaurants on Boracay Island and in Manila.

Gathering of diwal started in the 1970s, but the demand for the shellfish rapidly grew in the 1980s, according to Belinda Estalilio, Roxas coastal resource management coordinator.

Years of scarcity

Overharvesting resulted in the rapid decline of volume in 1997 and the bivalve had once remained scarce for almost a decade.

Garrido said the city government implemented a rehabilitation and regulation program to save the diwal from extinction. The program involved, among other components, a research conducted by marine scientist Dr. Liberato Laureta of the University of the Philippines Visayas, which became a basis for the four-year moratorium on diwal harvesting.

A shellfish reservation zone was also established.

In 2004, gathering and harvesting resumed. Fifteen tons of diwal worth P2.25 million were taken from a 1-hectare area. The next year, volumes went up to 60 tons valued at P9.542 million.

Harvesting, however, had to be stopped from 2007 to 2008 as successive volume and bad weather again depleted the diwal stocks in 2006.

Concrete barriers

Garrido said that in 2006, the city government installed the first of around 3,000 concrete jacket-type shaped barriers in the breeding grounds to prevent trawling and illegal gathering. The barricades, which cost P4,000 each, also serve as protection for diwal breeders and against sand dredging.

The industry bounced back from July 2009 to December 2010 with a 100-ton output from a 5-hectare area. Two years later, volume again dropped to 40.50 tons due to unfavorable weather.

Sustaining the industry has been critical to the livelihood of around 200 diwal divers and boat operators.

"When harvesting was resumed, I took jobs like shellfish to survive and there were times when we did not have any harvest. Now, we can harvest yearly," said Arsenio Aguas, a boat operator and vice president of the Roxas City Diwal Divers Association Inc.

Harvesting is done by four divers per motorized boat. A third of the income goes to the divers while the rest goes to the boat operators.

Alternative livelihood

Divers can earn up to P1,000 per diver, which lasts four hours or more, each day, three times a week.

Harvesting is suspended when the volume falls below 100 tons, Garrido said. This is to ensure that there will be enough breeders for the next season.

During the lull, the divers turn to fishing for their livelihood. "We need an alternative and extra source of livelihood because income from diwal-diving is unstable and dependent on the weather," Aguas said.

How to sustain the rehabilitation of a still fragile industry is a major challenge.

Rizalde Arevalo, a fishing regulating officer, said that aside from strictly implementing harvest regulations, the city had deployed bantay dagat patrol boats to guard against illegal diving for diwal. The patrols focus on a 6,000-square kilometer area where the diwal areas are concentrated.

Violators are slapped with a P5,000 fine per offense and the confiscation of boat and diving equipment for repeated offenses.

Arevalo said illegal harvesting had continued because divers were tempted by the high demand and price for the delicacy.

"As long as there are breeders, spawning will continue. But there have to be protocol and regulations should be strictly imposed," she said.

Abandoned and unpredictable weather patterns also pose challenges to the industry. Strong water currents, drifting sand and silt carried by heavy rain from the upland areas could suffocate the shellfish, Garrido said.

But with continued vigilance and commitment from the community, the diwal industry would continue to develop as Roxas' most iconic delicacy, she said.

DIWAL is a sought-after and expensive delicacy in Roxas City, Capiz.

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OPINION

Laguna vice

EDITORIAL

THE KILLING of a 19-year-old student of the University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna, has understandably riled not only the university community but the local and national governments as well. Ray Bernard Bellaranda, an agriculture student, was stabbed dead on March 4, causing fear and rage in UPLB as it happened less than a week after a student of Los Baños National High School was raped and slain in the same vicinity. The incidents have prompted the relief of the town's police chief and the entire municipal police force, as well as the rescheduling to an earlier date of a security summit originally set on March 24.

Bellaranda was stabbed in the chest by holdup men in Barangay Batong Malake at around 1:30 a.m. and was pronounced dead on arrival at Los Baños Doctors Hospital. It was in the same barangay that, on Feb. 27, the body of 14-year-old Rachel Grenada was found, a victim of apparent rape.

The killings have prompted a UPLB-wide campaign for justice and tighter security. The sprawling campus at the foot of the fabled Mount Makiling has porous borders that may have made it easier for criminal syndicates to prey on its young residents, many of whom come from outside Laguna. Bellaranda in fact was from Tanay, Rizal. With two other male students, he was coming from a dance rehearsal and was on his way home in a rented apartment when he was attacked by two men aboard a motorcycle on P.O. Santos Street in Batong Malake. He managed to flee but was told that police chief Senior Insp. Celso Cebanico was also raped and murdered, her body found on IRF Road in Barangay Tuntungin-Putho. Three months before that, two young men, one of them a 16-year-old, were killed in the same area. These killings happening one after the other last year should have alerted campus and local officials on the need to tighten security around UPLB. But whatever gains were driven up in improve security have proved inadequate.

Still, while there's a need to step up security at UPLB, the problem may go beyond the confines of the campus. Los Baños, so named by the Spaniards for its volcanic hot springs supposedly invested with curative powers, has been a favorite sanctuary of Metro Manilans eager to escape urban stress and the tropical weather. Its neighboring towns are likewise located at the foot of Makiling, a dormant volcano, and have built a strong tourism industry out of their hot springs. Tourists are likewise drawn to Laguna because of the beautiful Laguna de Bay and the province's beautiful topography. Moreover, Laguna has become an educational center in Southern Luzon, with UPLB and several higher education institutions, such as Letran in Calamba and Colegio de San Agustin in Biñan, establishing campuses there. In addition, Laguna has become an industrial site, with Cabuyao City, for example, hosting the huge plants of Nestlé, San Miguel, Asia Brewery and Wyeth.

It's understandable that in shaping itself as an industrial center and a tourist and studying mecca, Laguna has been unable to manage its peace and order. Only last month, a public school teacher was found dead in a vacant lot in Victoria town. Last year, a forest guard was shot dead in Bay in 2007. Barangay Chairman Ernesto Natividad was murdered in his own home in Pagsanjan. Many of these cases have not been resolved. Last week, two Laguna policemen turned themselves over to their superior after a criminal complaint was filed against them by the justice department for the killing of a Chinese-Filipino businessman in Quezon City in January.

It's no wonder that there was much to-do recently when Biñan rolled out 32 closed-circuit television cameras, three of them near Laguna Lake, for round-the-clock monitoring of key areas and major thoroughfares in the city. Late October during the spate of killings in UPLB, campus officials talked about installing such cameras. But apparently, nothing has materialized of the plan. The failure of UPLB and Los Baños officials to improve security on and around the campus merely reflects on the sticky problem of public safety in Laguna.

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Example as tutor

VIEWPOINT

Joaquin L. Mercado

"EXAMPLE IS not the main thing in influencing others," 1952 Nobel Laureate Albert Schweitzer cautioned after long service, as doctor and pastor, in French Equatorial Africa. "It is the only thing."

The insight is reflected in an experimental Central Visayas project to tap high-school and church networks in conserving biodiversity as wealthier patrons subsidy shift.

"Biodiversity" is the coin bid on the block. It means the teeming variety of life, from animals and plants down to their genes. They parallel ecosystems.

In 1989, "Biological Abstracts" did not include it as a key word (Summary, dehumanize, and evaluation and overfishing, plus population surges, led to loss of irreplaceable biodiversity. It is now in everyday popular interest and policymakers.

Tubo Sindi, The Windows Inspector reports, Mindanao parrotfish, and Bicolano pygmy devil ray flowerpecker, unique to Cebu, have been wiped out. Of 200 native species, 89 are threatened.

Birds perform multiple tasks: from cubing forest subsistence to scattering seeds. A quarter of trees in North Negros' shrinking Kotse Reserve aren't regenerate if the present rate of bird-hunting continues, a University of British Columbia study notes.

The bird, birds or bat—Philippines alone, Dr. Lord University's Dr. Norman Myers warns, when they go, so do their unique genes. There are life-building blocks. Genes are spliced into "miracle rice," high-yielding corn, etc. Other genes drugs against cancer, AIDS, etc. Income because which may be needed the day after.

"This killing curve of species is genetic for future. It amounts to destroying options for our grandchildren," the late National Scientist Eduardo Gmelli warned. "Loss of species is irretrievable obliteration of unique life forms. So one has yet invented recall from annihilation. Extinction is forever."

Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 shows that many nations, including the Philippines, "pay lip service to conservation of biodiversity," inasmuch economic and human development against environmental protection. Filling and camping facilities are available to visitors by appointment or coupons walk-in request.

The initial realization of "High School Biodiversity Reserve" has documented modest achievements. There could pave the way for other schools elsewhere to emulate.

The original target was to provide 100 seedlings of 50 different native species in each school, or a total of 5000. The actual number planted was 1,000. More significant, follow-up activities resulted in a survival rate of over 90 percent. The number of trials constructed was double the target. Participation by local government and parent-teacher associations jacked up a modest project fund of P651,031 to P1.2 million.

Monitoring has produced an initial list of birds, primarily by Schools of different schools. It will serve as baseline for future studies. "The present selection of schools is done to develop a ring around the island of Cebu, as this bird monitoring program will have data from the entire island."

It is a start—still closer elsewhere the young. The example set by pioneer schools has begun to influence elementary and high schools next door. Region 7 is considering pilot projects in provinces other than the original four.

President Aquino's Proclamation No. 578 designated April 1 2012 as the "National Invasive Biodiversity." There may spur other provinces to launch their own school forums.

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* * *

Email: joaq_mercado77@yahoo.com

Puzzles for the uninitiated

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

IT MUST be puzzling to the uninitiated that despite its documented poor performance in the 2010 elections and the resulting complaints against it by those advocating clean, honest elections, etc., Smartmatic remains the cornerstone on Election' choice (with Commissioner Gus Lagman being the sole dissenter) in technology partner/provider in its election activities.

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Add to that anti-poverty organizations like Bantay Kita, Coalfog, and commercial publications (e.g., my husband, former Comelec Chair Christian Monsod, who delivered what was generally considered an excellent Joker Deggie Memorial Lecture on the topic). Even the Comelec Advisory Council (CAC) was critical—and recommended that Smartmatic be required for its shortcomings and that to Precinct Count Optical Scan (PCOS) machines not be purchased.

The only organization which continues to think that Smartmatic did a good job is the PPCRV (Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting), whose participation in supplying the Random Manual Audit was markedly less than stellar.

The irony is that Smartmatic's defense has always been that it was only following the Comelec's orders, thus laying full blame on the Comelec's technical and administrative incompetence and Ramon Magsaysay awardee Angel Alcala notwithstanding. Thus, the target set in 2003, to reduce biodiversity loss by 2010, hasn't been met.

Education is a first step in reversing a slide in to ecological collapse. Thus, Soil and Water Conservation Foundation, in collaboration with the Department of Education's Central Visayas regional office, launched the experimental project "High-School Biodiversity Reserve."

Six sites in Cebu and Bohol were picked. Negros and Siquijor will be included in the next phase. "We were starting at square one," recalls Bill Cromer of SWCF. "Most students had never seen a rainbow tree. Many had never seen cockatoos. Future leaders have little appreciation for the current heritage of this country."

In cooperation with local governments, students and teachers therefore created school forests, using native species participating schools were in Dao, Bal nanas, Mantalo Ayala, San Francisco, Malangas, and Calatrava, and Don Severino Ouanda High. They tracked birds encircled by the trees.

Bohol and Cebu are severely deforested. Their choice hinged on the landcropping of Tapiol Regional Office 7. Both sites have key biodiversity importance.

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The initial realization of "High School Biodiversity Reserve" has documented modest achievements. There could pave the way for other schools elsewhere to emulate.

The original target was to provide 100 seedlings of 50 different native species in each school, or a total of 5000. The actual number planted was 1,000. More significant, follow-up activities resulted in a survival rate of over 90 percent. The number of trials constructed was double the target. Participation by local government and parent-teacher associations jacked up a modest project fund of P651,031 to P1.2 million.

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Poverty as business' enemy

"NOTHING IS not the enemy, however is." This was how Manuel V. Pangilinan concluded his speech titled "How concerning work for the Philippines?" in the Conference on Mining's Impact on the Philippine Economy and Ecology last March 2 in Makati.

It is a pleasure to see a giant private mining company committing itself to the fight against poverty as one of its corporate objectives, it commitment that many hence hitherto hesitated but sometimes only hopes that his company will fight poverty in a fashionable way, i.e. with specific targets, and it means that its poverty reduction activities are to be measured and to have an impact.

To me, fighting poverty in a fashionable way means: (a) having adopted some definition of poverty (or more than one, since poverty has multiple dimensions); (b) having a quantitative assessment of present-day poverty in the relevant area/s; (c) having a scientific model of a logical theory of how the business operations affect poverty; (d) making numerical projections as to how much the business operations will reduce poverty in the short, medium and long term; and (e) having access to a reliable system for periodically updating the fulfillment of the assumptions in (d) and (e).

The baseless assessment (b) to something a company could do internally or outsource. The evaluation system (c), on the other hand, should be operated independently of the company since its credibility on this matter is very important.

I think it is possible for a business company to strive at a system for regularly evaluating poverty on the basis of a long-term research arrangement with one or more academic institutes, situated close to the area/s potentially affected by the mining operations, and with high standards for scientific excellence, fairness, and integrity.

Naturally, the mining company (or a group of them, to exploit economies in research) would be expected to contribute substantially to the costs of the system. Businesses that identify poverty as their enemy should help in tracking its movements.

Social Climate

Mahar Mangahas

Actually, I've never seen a private business do poverty-targeting before. Normally, fighting poverty is just add-on rhetoric for a private company rather than a serious objective for which its senior-level management accountable.

Official poverty-statistics won't help much. Business shouldn't imagine that existing poverty never does are handy. Mining has the highest poverty incidence of any sector in the country," said Chairman Manuel in his conference speech titled "Mining in a social justice issue."

He cited 49 percent as the poverty incidence in mining. (I suppose that refers to households with mining as primary source of income; in short, mining is a poor man's occupation. I wonder how at macro-area Palawan ranks in its contribution.) Mining is "the only sector where poverty incidence increased between 2003 [and] 2009," Manuel said.

With official poverty data being available up to provincial levels, Manuel was able to site high poverty percentages in the mining provinces as one of Caraga (47), Zamboanga Peninsula (43), and Ilocos (41), the national average percentage being 26. The source of his citation of 53 percent poverty in the municipality of Batangas is Palawan, "where this Tolisa has been operating for 20 years," is an occasional small-scale survey of the provincial office.

Those statistics pertain to general areas, rather than specific mining-project sites and adjacent communities. Having the properly-specific figures isn't feasible unless the mining companies had been tracking poverty all along according to the principles outlined above.

To me, inadequate timing is the biggest problem preventing the official statistics from being useful for fighting poverty. The official figures are more three years apart, and delivered more than one year late. That's much too-seldom, and much too slow.

Serious empowerment programs, whether public or private, deserve data that are at least annual, and delivered not more than six months after the reference year, the data frequency that is measured. Data for delivery should be not more than three months after the reference semester.

The most difficult poverty figures refer to the year 2009, or three years ago already; they became available only in February 2011. The most set of official figures will deal with 2012, and will be expected only in February 2014. The next report after that will only be in February 2017. Can a private mining company tolerate lackadaisical accounting that gives financial statements only once every three years, and delivers them one year late?

National poverty was officially flat over the last three reference years (2003, 2006 and 2009), despite the significant growth in per capita income. Therefore a more "complete" or growth-sensitive measure of how fast the poor endure the structure of economic growth is changed from that of the past decades. It was much softer, back in the 1990s and the 1980s, that economic growth led some (not much, but a little) impact on poverty reduction.

Poverty is only one of the countries that have persistent flaws, together with the rest of society. They should help in the application of science to cast a brighter light on these many battlefields.

• • •

I join my bosom colleagues in paying tribute to Augusto M. Tantoco, and in offering condolences to his family. By being an inspiring colleague to thanks to God, I shall remember him for fairness, sincerity, and decency.

• • •

Contact: FBD: www.ace.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@ace.org.ph.

Can this country be a nation?

ON FEB. 25, we celebrated a very important date in our recent history—the People Power Revolution of 1986. Yet, it was celebrated in only a small section of Iloilo as if that portion were the only beneficiary of the restoration of democracy in the country.

This low level of consciousness gives a long way in explaining why we, as a country, fall short in our quest for development. And to begin the question, "Can this country be a nation?"

Benedict Anderson wrote: "A nation is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship ... coming together in the hundreds of millions ... so as to unwittingly die for such limited imaginings."

The lack of an Edsa consciousness illustrates how we have so little sense of ourselves as a nation. We become a nation only when we begin to indulge ourselves in fundamental divides in our national history and build a sort of shared consciousness that can bring all Filipinos together.

What are these national divides?

1. The problem of endemic poverty. We cannot continue to have positive economic growth yet have more than a quarter (25.1 percent) of our people living in poverty. Something is wrong with our development model and our political leadership if this continues to be the case. We need to build an economy that generates jobs, the growth where the majority of our people can benefit—that and not just jobs and livelihoods in barely-existent households. The key drivers fail. time work for all.

2. The possibility of a national identity amidst linguistic diversity. We are a country of multiple languages. We shouldn't insist on a single national language or a centrally biased language as the bastion of our national identity. The diversity of our people as evidenced by the richness of regional languages should be viewed as a strength and not a weakness.

Commentary

Jose Miguel Luz

3. Synergy between regional and national history. The wealth of our pre-Hispanic and post-colonial symbols are lagging in orientation. Do not our history and symbols become more inclusive, we will never attain a truly Filipino national identity. Regional histories that contribute to a shared national history should be encouraged, disseminated and taught in an unbiased and fair manner.

4. Religion as politics. There is too much religious organization weighing in on the country's political development. While church hierarchies think they can dictate on political appointments and the political choices of their flock, this contravenes the history of democracy. People, not people who run them and act for themselves, not people being told what to do or whom to vote for by church elders.

5. Politics as family business. To build a functioning democracy, electoral reforms must allow for better, more responsible representation at the national and local levels. Such reforms must take away the built-in advantages and the use of taxpayer money by incumbents who have political families in order to make electoral representation more inclusive.

6. The underclassing of the Filipino. Until the proposed K +12 education system is fully rolled out (and in a quality manner), education will continue to be a two-class system for those who can afford more for its education and those who cannot.

7. Corruption in governments. Corruption is the biggest risk to the economy. When this seemingly straightforward thing of a statement of assets, liabilities and net worth can be so

Jose Miguel Luz (luzmiguel.luz@gmail.com) is dean of the Center for Development Management at the Asian Institute of Management.

Transparency leads to competitiveness

LYSE: THE last year, we advocated that transparency can lead to competitiveness and that good governance is good for the economy. Our basic hypothesis is that transparency and good governance basically build trust in an economy and country. Trust creates some benefits, among these the ability to attract more investments, businesses and investors, more competitive and lean on bids for public projects, lower cost and better quality projects, and ultimately better services and job and income for the public.

In the case of the Philippines, I believe we will see the effects of transparency and good governance on our infrastructure sector and on the PPP (Public-Private Partnership) projects. After a lengthy review to clean up the bidding process and after sorting through some birth pains on the PPP front which contributed to the lower than expected public spending and economic growth in 2011, I think we have turned the corner and should see some acceleration and more activity in both areas.

Last year, many felt impatient with the pace of reforms and the few projects that has been identified to be done sooner than later. Government may surely continue to run fight against corruption and that it had become less cautious in its moves to jump-start the economy. Others suggest that the government had become vindictive and too focused on looking at the past rather than on looking forward.

I would argue the opposite. One of the biggest changes against the country—and a reason why we have such low competitiveness rankings—has been its low regard for the rule of law and its being soft on corruption, by pursuing smart and rebuilding institutions and processes, the country sends a strong message that business will be conducted in a far more ethical manner than in the past. However, this type of reform is necessarily slow and tedious and some

Business Matters

Guillermo M. Luz

patience is required before results can be shown. We cannot afford to ask for better governance and, at the same time, let the past for the past and forgotten. One of the reasons we got to a bad spot in the first place is that we were too prone to forgive and forget.

Thankfully, the mood has changed and the dividend we are beginning to see from all this transparency and accountability is the trust that the administration has very earned. That trust will yield further dividends in terms of credibility and confidence which will eventually be felt in the form of investments and economic activity. But only if the transparency, accountability and good governance were maintained.

We have already seen some signs of that with government spending significantly increasing and the first PPP project successfully bid out in the fourth quarter of last year. This year, the Department of Public Works and Highways is expecting that it has conducted the bidding for most of its projects in the first half and that awards of awards have been released for roughly 70 percent of its projects. The early start ensures that the low public spending of last year is now history. Moreover, with construction ready to get into full swing before the summer starts, that should augur well for the pace of construction work before the rainy season resumes.

A second good sign I see that transparency has brought is the number and quality of bidders signifying their interest to bid on projects. In the past, many reputable firms chose to keep away from bidding for government projects for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the level of corruption associated with government projects. This time around, we are seeing large numbers of firms bidding for the first time. When the Department of Transportation and Communications pre-qualified its bidders for the first time, 46 companies passed an interest in the project and 12 eventually passed the first round of qualifications. This was short listed to seven firms, with six of them participating in a government bid for the first time. When the Asian Development Bank was finally announced, firms that lost out reminded their congratulations to the winning agency. The conduct of the bid and the response of the industry were a testimony to both the value the private sector had in the government as well as the industry's desire to get engaged in the country. In the case of the PPP Center and its successor for the construction of school buildings, 17 firms have expressed interest so far, many of them first-time bidders. With that kind of response, can eventually solving the problem of classroom shortages be far behind?

Finally, one of the most important benefits of pushing for more transparency and accountability is that it sets the benchmark for acceptable behavior not only for future administrations but for this one as well. By setting a high standard, this administration is basically challenging people to measure it against that standard. As long as it lives to that standard, it will continue to build trust among the people. That trust will eventually keep the virtuous cycle going, which brings with it greater economic benefits for the people.

Guillermo M. Luz is private sector co-chair of the National Competitiveness Council. He can be contacted at pcc.luz@competitive.org.ph.

Pieces of a dream

IN THE emergency room of a ghastly old hospital, a little girl bashed mentally at a group of men dressed in immaculate whites. She didn't know what they were talking about but she heard words like "blood loss," "heartbeat" and "dehydration." It looked like they were saving the life of a wounded woman lying on the hospital bed not minded by crying relatives.

The little girl stared at the men with eyes wide open. And as they sighed in [illegible]

Young Blood

Kimberley B. Gatdula

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the [illegible] and below — Ed.

Years after that fateful day, here I am. I want to be a doctor. And that's my dilemma.

Becoming a doctor is not something I decided overnight. It's not a result of a whim, or a fulfillment of my parents' dream. It is truly my dream, not just a childhood wish. It is my greatest desire. I have been an aspirant since high school. "To help the sick and see their smile"—that's what I say whenever I'm asked why I want to be a doctor. And just like any other parents, I'll do anything and everything just to make my dream come true.

Just dreaming about it has not been easy. I already had this defined impression that it would be really difficult. And that is an understatement.

As the first step in making my dream a reality, I took the Philippine Medical Admission Test (PMAT) in Manila on Dec. 4, 2011.

My memory of that fateful day is still vivid. I remember being so excited. I woke up at around 3 a.m. because I had to take the bus from Lipa (in Batangas) to Manila and I didn't know exactly where the designated place was. But I thought the journey would be like hunting new lands in our shoes. I would have the opportunity to familiarize myself with the place and I can take the required exams.

There were thousands of test-takers and I had a hard time finding the assigned room. Along the way, I met some old friends. They were astonished to learn that I would be taking the exams for would be doctors. It thrilled me so much to see those familiar faces and aspirants at the same time; it brought back my desire to be a doctor.

However, as they say it's too soft in the path.

I was still overwhelm. It was a Thursday a few days before Christmas, and everyone was supposed to be happy and full of love. The results of the NMAT were readily available for the test-takers to see right after the test. But the possibility of having a low score, I knew quite well that I had not performed well enough. Thanks to Sigmund Freud's defense mechanisms, I even practiced some tactics on how to handle the aftermath of seeing the results, whether depression or euphoria. But deep in the heart of my mind, I was hopeful that somehow luck was on my side on that day of the exam.

I thought I was ready to face the consequence of my actions. But I was wrong; I was not emotionally prepared for it. Before reading (and downloading) the results, I prayed to God. I thanked Him for the chance to take the NMAT and told Him of my hope that the results would be fine for me to endure. After the hour-long 15 minutes of my life, I mustered the courage to click the "download" box.

At first, I stared in awe. Then I was stunned. Minutes later, tears were welling in my eyes. I cried helplessly in my room, with no one to talk to. I was so ashamed, so emotionally wounded. Well, who wouldn't be? The results said it all. I flunk my first attempt as a board exam—by a low score. Moreover, my form of schooling would not be possible with that kind of outcome.

But life did not stop there. I told myself that it was just the beginning of something great. The story is just about to start, yet my endurance has been tested.

I am scheduled to take the NMAT again on March 25. I am determined to be wiser than mine, and hopefully I will do better. I'll be courageous and mindful all over again.

I'm thankful to God for giving me the motivation to face the ailing. Medicine is one of the noble professions and I know deep in my heart that embarking on this path will give me authentic happiness. And I'm grateful to my family members for their understanding and support. I know it won't be easy going. My getting into medical school will probably drain bank accounts and empty banks.

I'm also grateful to my friends who are always there to extend me their "I can." I owe them a lot for giving me courage and lots of hope.

In his book "The Alchemist," Paulo Coelho said: "Tell your heart that the fear of suffering is worse than the suffering itself, and no heart has ever suffered if it goes in search of its dream. Because every part of the dream is a moment of encounter with God and with eternity."

I hope my fellow MU aspirants can relate to my story. I'm wishing them the best of luck on the bending path we are about to take.

Kimberley B. Gatdula, 20, is a fourth-year psychology student at De La Salle Lipa.

In The News

Pascual Garcia III

Higher standard for CJ

THE FEB. 23 editorial of the Inquirer is absolutely correct: The Corona impeachment case should be "resolved to the satisfaction of the people."

A chief justice should be held to a higher standard of ethical behavior than ordinary government employees. If Chief Justice Renato Corona and his Supreme Court unanimously dismiss, as it had dismissed, 45 motu-to-set-aside cases against wives and family members of Arroyo officials, including Mike Arroyo, then he should be impeached.

The Supreme Court is the last bastion of justice in the country. If the people lose confidence in the Supreme Court, then they will lose confidence in the government.

Corona no longer commands the people's respect because he has obviously used his high government position to enrich himself, in addition to his being engaged in activities unbecoming of the justice. It is unwise, not President Aquino, who has debased the independence and autonomy of the judiciary. Thus, Corona has lost all moral authority to lead the Supreme Court.

The Inquirer editorial is right: Wisdom, not popularity, should prevail in the ongoing impeachment trial. And the national interest demands that the Chief Justice should not stay a minute longer in his high post.

—JUAN PIC, pio_roa@yahoo.com

Is 'other people's bias' Inquirer's advocacy?

THIS REFERS to the letters to the editor section of the Inquirer last March 7, particularly two letters from your readers attacking Gen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

By favoring the detractors of former Supreme Court Justice Corona, the Inquirer's version may have put into question the Inquirer's impartiality and sense of journalistic balance.

We appeal to the powers-that-be of the Inquirer to be vigilant of the practice of favoring one side of the issue. Please do not let your readers' inaccurate other people's bias as your advocacy.

—ATTYS. LIPA A. SANTILLAN, deputy chief of staff, Office of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago

LETTERS

No to mining in ecosystems

THIS REFERS to the March 3 Inquirer article on the issues focus on mining. I would like to correct some information.

My correct statement was: Mining, whether large-scale or small-scale, is a land-ecosystem-destroying enterprise. In essence, I am not seeing a distinction allowing some Philippines I am saying that mining in mixed ecosystems which there are mountains, forests, mixed woods, mangroves, farmlands and fishery resources, is irresponsible.

I am not sure of other areas, but I do know that in Palawan, the areas that Gerry Brimo says are not good for agriculture and have no biodiversity are areas that the farmers and fishermen are describing very differently. They are farmers and farmers and farmers on agriculture; the situation is very different now.

I was in Sumuat and I was told that actual Tapiolele Mines is bulldozing land, where there are thousands of mangrove jelly fish. The fishermen look at what is happening in Sumuat and they are worried because the silt seems to be increasingly encroaching on their area.

I seriously question any statement which says that the only economic alternative open to that place is mining.

The next statement I need to correct is that the $1 billion being invested for mining is in Brooke's Point in Palawan, not in Sibuyan.

In closing, I need to reiterate that biodiversity is crucial in the ecosystem we are people. It is vital not only for our society but for the planet. Currently there are numerous mining exploration investigating biodiversity areas. Given that the Philippines is the No. 7 typhoon country in the planet, mining in biodiversity areas must not be allowed. Again: No amount of reforestation can restore or replicate the complex system of an ecological system. So much, in biodiversity areas, it is much more important to conserve the ecosystem alone.

—REGINA LOPEZ, managing director, LOPEZ Foundation Inc.

Gatekeepers needed in times of crisis

THE CELEBRATED titled "Justice's Testimony in the Supreme Court" (Inquirer, 3/1/12) is another good example from Rigoberto Tiglao. It points out the fact that there is bias in the impeachment trial and that the presidential have come up very scripted. The columnist is brave and loyal enough to his profession; he did what he is supposed to do as a responsible writer.

As a gatekeeper of society he knows the limits of his pen. To be sure he knows more about those facts, considering that he has been working in the industry for many years now. Though he keeps his columns brief, they have substance. Despite being criticized sometimes, he does not stop to pursue his advocacy.

Tiglao we need more gatekeepers like Tiglao in these times of political crisis—one who will stand up for what is right and one who will show us what kind of government we have right now. Tiglao is definitely one of the few we have in town.

—JUNAT ORIA, Junatoria@yahoo.com

Senate 'condoning insufferable behavior'?

THE SENATE impeachment court is right in granting private prosecution lawyer Vladimir Aguirre the warrant of arrest. However, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago's verbal abuse of the prosecution panel, calling them "pests" is morally despicable. What arrogance of power—who...is who...is protected by dignity?

Anyone, especially a senator, who has no respect for the human dignity of every human being, loses his or her personal worth and dignity. The lady senator no longer entertains the diligent with her style, entrapment homilies and self-congratulatory displays of superior knowledge and experience in judicial proceedings; in fine, she dishonors the impeachment court.

Does the impeachment court condone such insufferable behavior? What sanction has it for misrepresentation disregard of basic human dignity? Why is she not herself detained or stopped from committing more dishonorable acts? If her fits of rage and display of self-satisfaction should continue as the International Criminal Court, she would inevitably become our country's disgrace and a worthwhile object of ridicule.

—CRISPIN B. BEATO, university professor emeritus, Department of English, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City

Boracay swimmers are 'endangered species'

THE TIBET time I went to Boracay was in 1985. Though it was very nice then because there were few people, I don't suffer from false nostalgia because, I must admit, it's good to have running water and electricity on the island.

On March 29, 2010, the propeller of a motorized pump boat mangled my left foot and part of my leg while I was swimming near Station 1. Thank God, my mother was able to borrow a bolo cutter from the hotel of Club Med's girlfriend (no idea) I will be forever grateful for saving my leg) and I was flown to the Makati Medical Center where I underwent two major surgeries.

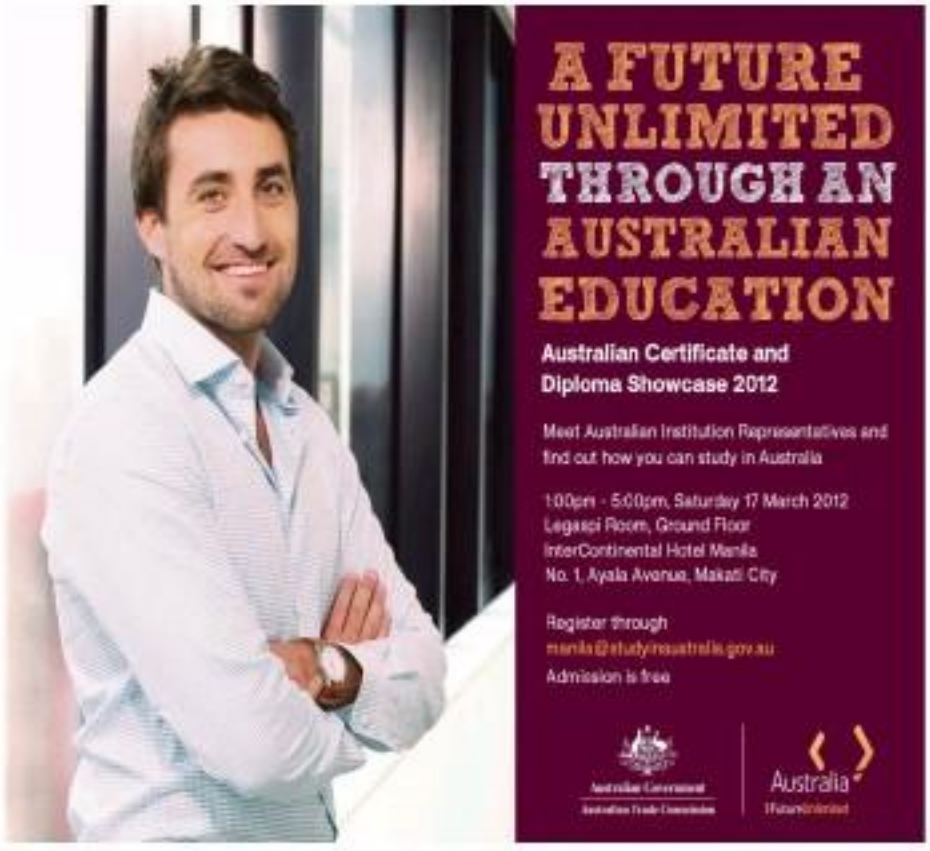
Almost four nails were inserted in my foot to keep it together and many months of painful recovery on crutches, I am recovering again, but now always accompanied by a "footguard" on a cushion armed with a whistle (so are as always) for my safety.

Today, motorized boats continue to regularly cruise at full speed near the shore with complete impunity, endangering the lives of bathers, causing noise pollution with their whirring, smoky diesel engines and the destruction of corals with their anchors.

I have written letters to the Boracay Coast Guard and the Office of the Mayor, and though their hot heart a slight improvement, during last year's Holy Week another swimmer got run over on the head.

I am afraid that until pump boats are totally banned from Puka Beach, all assurance in Boracay will be on the "endangered species" list.

—FELICITY PASCUCCI, 2305 Kamuning St., San Isidro, Makati City



More fun for career women in PH–report

By Doris C. Dumlao

IT'S MORE fun for women climbing the corporate ladder in the Philippines than in most other places in the world. More Filipino women are taking on leadership positions in business and more of them enjoy flexible work arrangements.

This, according to the Grant Thornton's International Business Report (IBR) released yesterday by its local member firm Punongbayan & Araullo (P&A).

From 32 percent in 2011, the ratio of Filipino women in top corporate positions rose to 39 percent, making the Philippines second only to Russia, along with Thailand and Botswana, in the list of countries with a growing number of women joining the "C-suite."

The "C-suite" refers to executive level belonging to a corporation's senior management team and is so called because these people usually have a "C" in their official titles, such as chief executive officer, chief operating officer, chief financial officer, chief investment officer or chief information officer.

Equal access

"The result of the study shows that top posts in the country are accessible to men and women equally," said Marlon Bautista, P&A managing partner and CEO.

The survey looked into the roles women play in senior management and found that as in most Philippine households, women leaders end up with responsibilities involving finance. This year, 64 percent of Filipino women in senior management were either chief finance officers or were involved in finance positions, up from last year's 51 percent, the study said.

The Grant Thornton International Business Report provides insight into the views and expectations of 12,000 business owners and 40 economies. This unique annual survey draws upon 20 years of trend data for most European participants and nine years for many non-European economies.

The latest data were drawn from interviews with chief executive officers from the global economy between November 2011 and February 2012. The target respondents were chief executive officers, managing directors, chair or other senior executives primarily across the services manufacturing (25 percent), retail (15 percent) and construction (10 percent), with the remaining 25 percent spread across all sectors.

For the first time, the IBR asked respondents if they offered flexible work arrangements. Sixty-six percent of Philippine businesses polled answered yes, above the global average of 52 percent and the Southeast Asian average of 63 percent.

"This is one way of encouraging women to aim for the top, especially those who have to balance their career with motherhood," Tejada said.

But the global picture isn't looking very rosy at the same study showed that the proportion of women holding senior management posts has been on a steady decline in all major regions of the world except Europe since 2009.

Results from 2011 and 2012 in the Southeast Asian region showed that although the number of women in top management positions remained above the global average, only the Philippines and Vietnam recorded an uptick in numbers from the past year.

"When we started tracking women in leadership posts in emerging markets such as BRIC (referring to the fast-growing emerging market blocs Brazil, Russia, India, China) and the ones in Southeast Asia, it was very encouraging to see that these dynamic economies were leading the pack in terms of welcoming women to the boardroom," Tejada said. "So it is a point of concern to see the proportion of women business leaders shrinking in these countries. Hopefully this doesn't signal a further drop in the coming years to the point where women are underrepresented globally."

Added Tejada: "The falling numbers globally should alert business leaders and get them to start asking why women aren't at present at the top of the ladder and what can be done about it. Hopefully, we can find more ways to open up those C-suite posts to women and continue to be a good example of gender equality here in the Asean (Association of Southeast Asian) region."

CARDINAL SANCHEZ: "We felt the Mass so much, he cried in every Mass."

Sanchez, country's 5th cardinal, dies at 91

From page A1

and out of the hospital prior to his death.

Sanchez was brought to University of Santo Tomas hospital on Feb. 11 and remained home after two weeks. "He always wanted to go home," said his nephew.

Interment March 12

His body was initially brought to the Dominican headquarters of the Immaculate Mother in Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City, where he resided following his return from Rome last year. They were transferred at 5 a.m. today to the Cathedral Shrine of the Good Shepherd in Angeles's diocesan Patrocinio Park in Quezon City.

His burial has been scheduled on March 12 at 10 a.m. He will be interred in a crash prepared for him at the cathedral's crypt. Retired Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal will officiate the Holy Mass and deliver the homily, according to Swedelbee Bishop Antonio Tobias.

"We apologize for the rather short wake in his house. But we could not extend it because he is so embalmed for the sake of his many friends and relatives who would want to say a prayer at his bier and make their last farewell," said Tobias.

CBCP president and Cebu Archbishop Jose Palma described Sanchez as a "prelate of passionate love: he loved God and loved the Church with joy and dedication."

"He left a legacy of ministry worthy of imitation and was a source of pride for the Philippines," said Palma.

'Gift of service'

Manila Archbishop Luis Antonio Tagle also shared Enid for Sanchez, whom he said was "a gift of service" to both the Church and the society. "We trust that the Lord would grant him the reward promised to faithful servants. Let us pray for his eternal repose."

Archbishop Emeritus Orlo Cruz remembered Sanchez as a very emotional man of God, especially when holding Holy Masses.

"He was very sensitive as far as Holy Mass was concerned. He felt it so much that he cried—and that was in every Mass," recalled Cruz.

Novaliches Bishop Emeritus Teodoro Bacani said Sanchez was a big loss to the Church, especially in defending family and life.

"Very few have reached his stature. He served the Church very well in all his best capacity ... he was also a staunch pro-life advocate after he retired (from the Vatican) and returned home," said Bacani, even Church ran Radio Veritas.

During yesterday's news briefing in Malacañang, President Aquino also extended his condolences to the prelate in a statement delivered by presidential deputy spokesperson Abigail Valte.

"We join the Catholic faithful in mourning the passing of His Eminence Jose Cardinal Sanchez, archbishop emeritus of Nueva Segovia. The loss of Cardinal Sanchez will be deeply felt by the Catholic Church and the world over," said Valte.

International level

Sanchez was among the illustrious members of the Philippine Catholic hierarchy although he did most of his work on the international level as president of the Roman Curia's Congregation for the Clergy said Bacani.

A native of Pandan, Catanduanes province, the late Cardinal was ordained priest in Naga City at the age of 26 in 1946. He rose from assistant pastor of San Raphael Parish in Legazpi City to vicar general of the Legazpi Diocese.

Some 22 years later, he was appointed auxiliary bishop of Caceres and titular bishop of Lorni. The papal nuncio to the Philippines at the Archbishop Carmelo Borne ordained him to the episcopacy.

At 31, he was named coadjutor bishop of Lucena and was appointed archbishop of Nueva Segovia on Jan. 12, 1982. He was designated secretary of the Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples in the Vatican in 1985.

In 1991, he was elevated to cardinal, becoming the fifth Filipino to be named to the College of Cardinals. Pope John Paul II subsequently named him prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy and was appointed president of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See.

He resigned from the position at 71. He also retired as prefect of the Roman Curia's congregation in 1998 but stayed in Rome until December 2010 when he decided to come back to the Philippines to help the bishops campaign against the birth control measure.

Campaigner vs birth control

In an interview with CBCP News upon his return, Sanchez said he left Rome to come home precisely because of the problems the country is facing, especially on family. "I'm 91 years old already but I want to go home to the Philippines and somehow use my voice to (be) the pastoral life of the Church."

He said that he wanted to lend his voice in campaigning against the family planning measure.

Novaliches Bishop Tobias yesterday advised those who want to pay their last respects to the late cardinal to skip the flower offerings and instead donate to his "favorite concern," which was supporting vocations for the priesthood or consecrated religious life.

"Contributions are being accepted at the parish office, at the chancery of this diocese and at a designated table within the cathedral's premises," said Tobias in a statement.

Apart from the regular Masses in the Cathedral on Sundays and weekdays, two more Masses have been scheduled at 9 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. during the wake, said the bishop.

Since the late cardinal also loved music, various choirs in the diocese would be rendering their own repertoire of sacred music for at least half an hour on night during the wake following the last Mass of the day.

With a report from Norman Bordadora

'PAF no more all air, no force'

From page A1

multi-role helicopters worth P2.8 billion where the Philippines received as part of its modernization program.

The new 49 S-fixed (fuselage) helicopters will be used for combat support as well as disaster relief missions. Deia Cruz said in homerun ceremonies at the former US Clark Air Base in Pampanga province. (Still related story on Page A8.)

Bello Cruz said the acquisition of the new sophisticated aircraft has given a "glimpse of many more changes to come."

'Thing of the past'

From being the best in Southeast Asia after World War II until the 1960s, the PAF can no longer meet its flight time requirements without being replaced despite modernization plans.

The PAF deeply felt its decline when the last of its F5 "Nine Diamond" fighter jets was officially decommissioned in 2005, leaving the military incapable of intercepting intruders in the country's airspace. Meanwhile, the number of accidents involving refurbished planes and helicopters piled up.

"The lack of equipment has always been our handicap. But despite that, we never let our guard down and rendered focused on our strength, the talent of our people," Deia Cruz said at brief ceremonies at Air Force City. "Sometimes this joke has to that we only have air and no force."

"But eventually this will be a thing of the past," he added. "We can now see a horizon of better times, the beginning of an Air Force that is adequately equipped and nibbled."

Morale boosters

The guests, Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin and its head honors of the Philippines Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jessie Dellora, poured champagne on the helicopters' noses during the ceremonies.

The new "Robin" combat utility helicopters are expected to take some of the load off the military's workhorse. The refurbished Vietnam War-era UH-1H "Huey" utility helicopters.

Used for transporting troops and cargo, the new helicopters are considered crucial for the emergency medical evacuation of wounded people in combat operations and for search and rescue missions during disasters.

Bello Cruz said the arrival of the new helicopters was a big morale booster.

"I know many of our fellow soldiers in the Philippine Army and this Marines will be very happy with the improved capability of their Air Force," Deia Cruz said.

Demonstration ride

Maj. Randy Buena, group leader of six military pilots who have flown the new helicopters for test flights, said they were "amazed" at what the machines could do.

"It's a beautiful aircraft," Buena said before members of the media were given a demonstration ride on board the helicopter.

This reporter was in a group of nine media members who, with two pilots and two crew members, flew for 40 minutes from Air Force City base through Clark Freeport Zone to the coast of Mt. Pinatubo and back.

Unlike a ride in the noisy Huey engine-heavy, the ride in the Robin was smooth throughout despite the turbulence outside.

The pilots demonstrated the chopper could go on auto-pilot and showed off maneuvers.

According to the briefer, the Robins are equipped with the latest navigation and electronics systems that allow them to operate day and night under conditions like fog and night.

Credible defense

The PAF currently has 80 UH-1H helicopters, 18 MG-520 helicopter gunships, two Italian EC135 anti-terrorism helicopters, 12 trainers, plus about a dozen surveillance UV-10 attack and observation planes, spokesperson Lt. Col. Miguel Ernesto Okol said. One C-130 transport aircraft is in service and two are undergoing repairs expected to be completed this year, he added.

The Philippines may lease fighter jets under long-delayed emergency air-to-air defense security ties with military assistance largely from the United States. Its longtime ally, and recently acquires arms and equipment from other countries.

Manila last year said it would seek F7F-15 fighter jets from Washington and is preparing territorial disputes in the West Philippine (South China) Sea with Beijing. Washington has provided a Coast Guard cutter to the Philippines and agreed to send another one this year.

Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario said the Philippines is committed to build "a minimum credible defense posture and the US has expressed their willingness to help us." With a report from AP

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Environment, economic execs agree to revisit mining laws

By Norman Bordadora

ENVIRONMENT and economic officials have agreed on a need to revisit existing mining laws and policies to determine how much revenue the government receives from mining operations in the country, a Malacañang official said.

Secretary Ricky Carandang, head of the Presidential Communications Development and Strategic Planning Office, said this was among the consensus that developed during the meeting yesterday between environment officials and members of the Cabinet economic cluster.

"There's a consensus to revisit how much government gets by allowing mining in the country," Carandang told reporters.

He said the government is looking at the experiences of other countries like Canada, Australia and South Africa in generating revenues from mining.

Carandang described the meeting as a comprehensive discussion on mining's ample allocation for the environment, the economy and the indigenous people. Existing mining laws and policies were also discussed, he said.

President Aquino dropped by during the meeting and told it to bring the government closer to finalizing a policy on mining in the country, Carandang added.

Among those who attended the meeting were Environment Secretary Ramon Paje, Presidential Adviser on Climate Change Emmanuel De Guzman, Climate Change Commissioner Lucille Sering, Budget Secretary Florencio Abad, Presidential Management Staff chief Julia Abad, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and Mineworks Secretary Regulo Ochoa Jr., who presided over the discussion.

Purisima, in a briefing last week in Malacañang, said the mining industry was one of the areas they are to evaluate for the country's economic growth.

"Definitely it is the part, the way the laws were implemented, it was not a true revenue situation. The government actually was not able to get its fair share from mining activities," Purisima said.

The finance secretary said the government's total collection from the mining industry amounted to just a little over P2 billion while total revenue from the mining sector was over P1.2 trillion.

Gov't drops mining EO

From page A1

do need to be identified because they were not authorized to speak on the matter until the Office of the President has issued the policy statements.

According to Malacañang insiders privy to the discussions, the policy statements would cover three important parameters that were part of the canceled EO.

The government was expected to adhere to EO that would detail new mining rules in February, but the mining sector voiced a fierce protest, saying it would make the Philippines less attractive to investors.

Later, mining advocates and environment groups went head to head in a conference sponsored by the Management Association of the Philippines, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Financial Executives of the Philippines. One of the sources told the conference, which discussed the pros and cons of mining in the Philippines, was "influential" in scrapping the planned EO.

"The government will not issue an EO. It will release a policy statement," a source said, who could not be identified because of the confidentiality of the meeting.

"As a general statement, it would include how to implement mining rules and reviewing existing laws. It would also recommend additional laws. It is up to the President if he wants to act on the recommendations," the source said.

Another Malacañang insider who was at the meeting if the economic and climate change Cabinet clusters yesterday said that the policy statement, which is not enforceable as an EO, would reveal "how the government looks at mining."

EO may follow

Another source privy to the discussions at the meeting stressed that an EO or another directive would follow the policy map. But he said it was still premature to say that the order will be in the form of a presidential order.

The policy pronouncement on mining, another source said, will trigger another round of consultations with the private sector and environment groups. "The government will not rush this," the source said.

The policy would address mining environmental compliance rules for mining firms and for what is to be considered mining in the Philippine context. "Whatever happens, we will not sacrifice the environment," the source said.

The policy statement would also harmonize local and national mining regulations to make sure that local mining policies, which protect small-scale mining, follow national standards and regulations. It would also clarify the revenue sharing between the local and national governments.

The policy pronouncement would come as well after the government optimizes its earnings from the mining industry following a controversial agreement that its share from the mining sector's revenues is too small.

Small contribution to the GDP

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has called for the imposition of a first-generation royalty on mining firms on top of the current two percent excise tax but the proposal has been put on hold. There were also recommendations to remove certain incentives enjoyed by the mining industry and introduce possible changes to mineral agreements between the government and the mining companies to make sure the government gets its fair share.

According to the DENR, the mining industry's contribution to the government revenues could compared to its sweet earnings. Environment Secretary Ramon Paje said the government loses P5 billion every year from not collecting royalty fees from mining companies.

Despite the mining industry's increased earnings in recent years, its contribution to the gross domestic product has not followed suit. In his speech at the recent mining conference, Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) Director Leo Jasareno said mining's contribution to the country's gross domestic product has not been able to break the 1.5 percent barrier for a long time now."

"Mining's contribution to total exports is also similarly stunted," he said.

Booming industry

Mining is a booming industry in the Philippines after the Aquino government allowed the entry of foreign firms to operate metallic mines here. At present, there are 51 mining companies in the Philippines. Small-scale miners number between 300,000 to 400,000. Metallic and mining duties were 5.14 million hectares or 3.9 percent of the country's total land area.

There are also eight projects in the pipeline that will significantly contribute to the country's mineral output in the next two to three years, the DENR said.

The country's mining tenths also are robust earnings in the past years due to the high prices of precious metals, particularly gold.

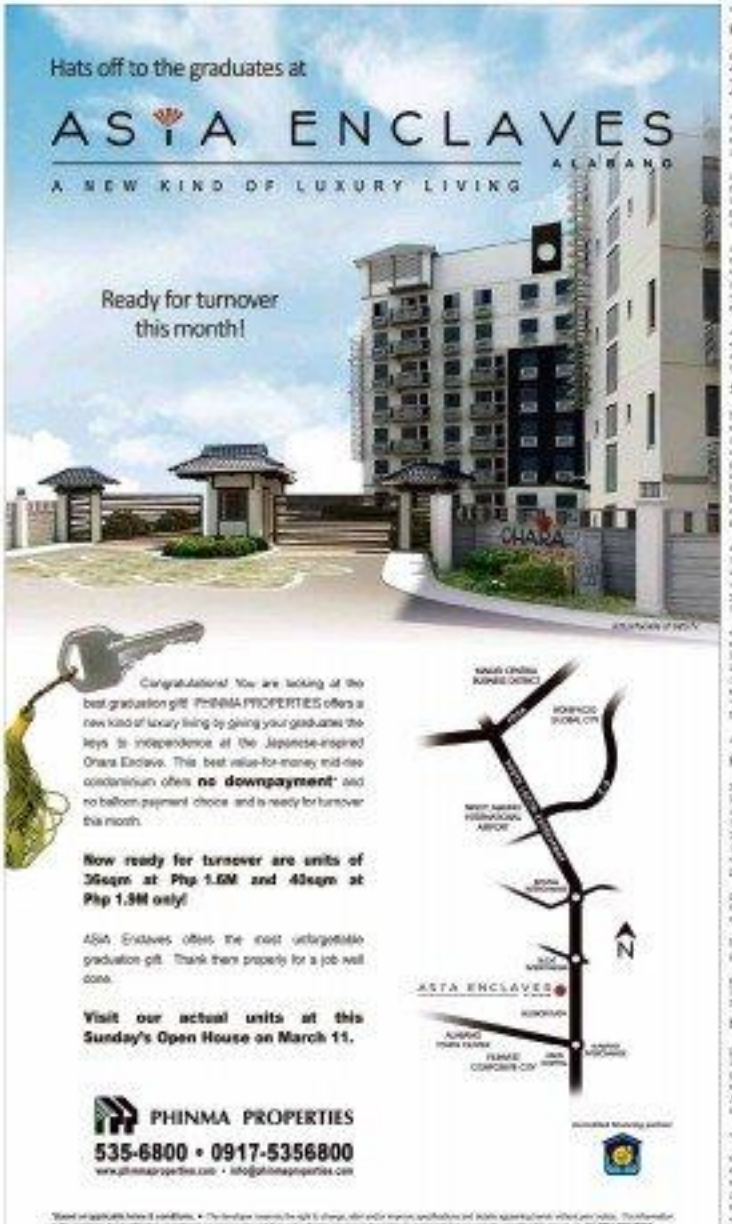
For 2011, the metallic mining sector posted a gross production value (GPV) of P122 billion, a nine-percent increase from 2010's P112 billion.

No MPSAs anymore

According to a source, there was a proposal to remove the Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) as the list of options, leaving mining firms to apply either for a Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) or engage in a joint venture with the government.

"There will be no MPSAs anymore," the source said.

An MPSA, according to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, is an agreement between the government and a mining operator that grants a contractor the exclusive right to conduct mining operations within the contract area. Operators under an MPSA contract pay the government a two-percent excise tax.



Sister Flory: They can keep money but we want justice

ANA BASA: The Carmen spurned original stockholders.

CORONA: "Sold out by family from inside public"

By Chana Ye
Daily Inquirer

DESPITE the ironic convening of the family property dispute still unsettled, Sister Flory Basa said she had been long forgotten by sister, Cristina, and the latter's husband, impeached Chief Justice Renato Corona.

The family had also ceased to demand their share of the disputed inheritance but would continue to search for justice, said Basa, 70, a Franciscan missionary who is the eldest surviving member of the Basa family.

"My sister Ana left until. Of they can keep the money. They can return it if they want. They already have it. But we are also looking for justice," said Sister Flory, referring to Corona's mother, Carmen Basa Bono.

The nun said that of her siblings, it was her brother, the late Jose Ma. Basa III, the father of Ana Basa, who had been the most ardent about seeking justice for the family.

"Ana's father was not hurt by this issue. Cristina allegedly sold... Ana is just picking up from what her dad started, this search for justice," Sister Flory said.

Members of the Basa family have accused Corona of ignoring the original shareholders of Carmen Copper and Smelter Inc. (BOIL), which was created to manage the Basa estate.

The controversy over the Basa property surfaced in the course of the impeachment trial of the Chief Justice after the Corona legal team claimed that the P22.6 million deposited in one of the Corona accounts at Philippine Savings Bank actually belonged to BOIL.

Corona also said he took out an P11-million loan or cash advance from BOIL, which he listed in his SALN as among his liabilities.

Sister Flory was able to reach down to Sister Flory in a convent in Cavite City after her sister Ana Basa gave a lengthy interview with the Inquirer.

Sister Flory corroborated Ana's account of the roots of the feud between Cristina and the rest of the family.

Defense rules out Basas as witnesses for prosecution

From page A1

known yesterday.

"Prosecutors cannot decide who or what to present until we tell our case," he added.

The defense panel is set to begin its presentation of evidence on Monday, March 12.

New evidence not allowed

Following the heated interview with Basa, the prosecution panel indicated it might introduce her and Basa's aunt, Sister Flory Basa, as rebuttal witnesses when the defense presents its case.

Bello Rep. Red Tupas Jr., the panel head, said Basa's allegations about how she and other members of the Basa family had been suppressed "by Corona and his wife" (subject to the very close scrutiny of Chief Justice Corona."

Defense spokesperson Karen Jimeno reminded prosecutors that they had already rested their case, which Egita announced on Feb. 28. Tupas had told the impeachment court that the prosecution was dropping five of the eight articles of impeachment they brought against Corona.

"The prosecution cannot introduce new evidence after it has rested its case. They can only use it rebuttal to address statements raised by the defense," Jimeno explained.

In the interview with the Inquirer, Basa said the family was "abandoned" when it was revealed during the impeachment trial that Corona and his wife were in possession of P36 million from the sale of a Basa family property in Ismajilao, Manila.

Basa said family members were also surprised that Corona had availed of an P11-million loan from the family corporation, Basa Guimbar Enterprises Inc.

According to Sobredo, he talked with Cardo dela Cruz, Corona about Basa's allegations. He said Corona was "saddened that a family issue like this has been aired before the public, especially since it was set as soon among the compliments raised in the impeachment court."

He said Corona also was dismayed why Sister Flory had to be dragged into the controversy. He said, a series of Corona's relatives confirmed everything that Basa alleged in an interview with Radyo Inquirer on Monday," and the two-part interview with the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

"The Chief Justice is not mad at anyone, or any relatives. His respect for all family members remains," Sobredo said.

Motion to acquit

Defense lawyers yesterday filed a motion to acquit before the impeachment court, asking that the senate-judges issue a decision that the five articles that the prosecution had dropped "are dismissed with prejudice."

"At least some, 'with prejudice' means you are more protected from filing or submitting another motion involving the same articles. If and when our motion is granted, it means Jimeno prosecutors cannot charge the Chief Justice with the same offenses that they already withdrew," Sobredo said.

The lawyer said that until the impeachment court makes a clear pronouncement on the five articles already dropped by the prosecution, the defense panel "remains in a state of uncertainty" on its strategy.

Sobredo warned of the possibility that if the motion is denied, the prosecution would later again file the same articles they already dropped or initiate impeachment proceeding against the Chief Justice.

"On the other hand, if the motion is granted, it means the senate can no longer revive the same articles dropped or withdrawn by them," he said.

"It would be better to put that issue to rest before we proceed. Hopefully, there will be a ruling by the court to put this issue to rest before our team [starts our presentation]," Sobredo said.

CJ could be closer

Another defense lawyer, Rico Benito Quicho, said that during the first days of presentation, the defense would point out the incoherences that the House acted with undue haste in bringing the impeachment charges against the Chief Justice.

Sobredo, meanwhile, said that there is a "strong possibility" that Chief Justice Corona will testify in his impeachment trial despite earlier misgivings expressed by his lead counsel, Jose Alejandro Cuevas.

He said the defense panel was strongly considering presenting the Chief Justice as the witness stand. "If the need arises."

"We are not discounting it. It is a strong possibility," Sobredo said.

"If and when we decide to do so, the Chief Justice revealed to the client. But first, we have to lay down our storyline, the basis for his eventual presentation," he said.

Sobredo said that in order to thwart "initial calculations," the defense would reveal them to the media only a few weeks to make its presentation.

Chief Justice: Senator sent emissary who told me to quit

From page A1

cause I did not want to depart in utter in the state, the situation was somewhat tense. I did not want to make things worse," he said.

At the time, he said it became clear to him that his enemies wanted to remove him at all costs.

Not resigning

Asked if there was a point when he considered resigning in calls over loudly made by various senators for him to quit, he replied, "Never."

"If I'm fighting for a not myself, I'm fighting for a broader and higher interest than me—the country, the judiciary... That's why I cannot drop the fight because it's not for me. In truth, I have nothing to gain but everything to lose in this fight," he said.

"If I give in and the executive [takes] control of the judiciary and [the] legislature, I cannot avoid help. There's no more judiciary to run to, they will go to the courts," he said.

He said that in this fight he was not and taking national things but also intangible ones.

"If I win, I will be the chief justice, I won't be prejudged, my salary and benefits won't become. If I lose, I have put in stake my lives, my entire pension, my reputation and that of my family. Maybe my friends will desert to one by one. I also put at stake my entire retirement and pension because those will all be gone if I lose," he said.

Corona said he would accept with an open heart the ruling of the Senate impeachment court, but will not stop his fight for principles.

"Even if I lose and get kicked out, I will continue to fight because I still advocate," he said.

"I believe in the process under our Constitution and in the fairness of the Senate as a whole. That's why I'm inviting myself to the process. But from the very start, I put everything in God. Whatever God wants I will comply," he said.

'Take warnings seriously'

Corona also said he has many, of to seriously consider the death threats he has received, based on the advice of friends in the police and military as well as judges who are his friends.

"It is government officials' life. [threats] are frequent, whether there is some through letters or text messages. That's why I'm used to it and do not mind it. But in the past few months, my friends in the military and the police, especially from the intelligence community—they all told me, 'You better take the warnings seriously. We have reports,'" he said.

"There's why I become worried because of the advice coming all over another. They all told me to take the threats seriously because there are really threats against my life," Corona added.

Dvilos denies it

Sen. Franklin Drilon yesterday denied he was the source of the supreme source President Aquino used the administration spoke earth, instead of pursuing his case before the media.

"What is happening is that the Chief Justice is obviously trying to explain to the public what his side of the issue is, except on the matter of the discrepancies in his SALN and the unreported assets that were brought up during the prosecution's case, in the impeachment trial," said Deputy spokesperson Abigail Valte.

"Whether his allegations will stand in court, or whether he will put himself on the stand to substantiate his allegations he is free to do. And we would like to see him make those allegations under oath," she said.

"Who, however, would not their confines are along Corona and allegations that the Aquino administration had sent representatives to persuade him to resign and to discuss the Hacienda Luisita case.

Saying she had no knowledge about the issue, Valte said she would not enter officials about it.

"After read the government has no information about Chief Justice against Corona's life.

But the government would be ready to provide Corona with additional security if he believes he needs it, she said.

Ed Gohsangan

Antonio Calipio

Covering all bases

"The defense is covering all bases" on the eve of its presentation of evidence, said Enrile.

"Maybe, they don't want to let their guard down when it comes to running public opinion," he said.

Corona has claimed that at a lunch meeting with Sen. Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., a former student of his, Aquino had suggested that Corona consider resigning early to give way to Carpio as a so-called "term-sharing" proposal. The meeting took place before there was even talk of Corona being impeached.

Although Aquino has denied, he has not been on the trial itself, Marcos said that senator judges would naturally vote "judicial notice."

"We are not involved from that. And we are appropriate, in fact to make reports and reports were to PIC," Marcos said.

He noted that "all sides" were trying to gain an upper hand in the court of public opinion—defense, prosecution, Malacañang and the Supreme Court.

"The public is now involved in the trial outside of the courtroom. The objective is to present themselves before the public [as impeached] the verdict would be the same as public opinion," he said. With reports from Inquirer Research Group Michael Lim Ubac, Cathy Yamsuan and Newsen Bonifacio

Sereno should reconsider

MOUSE Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II has suggested that Associate Justice Ma. Lourdes Sereno reconsider her decision not to testify at the impeachment trial, after Chief Justice Renato Corona accused her of lying.

Sereno should come to the trial court and refute Corona's allegations that she had lied in her dissenting opinion on the high court grant of a temporary restraining order to former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo [sic] November.

The prosecution asked Sereno to testify on her dissenting opinion in which she accused Corona of "manufacturing" to allow Arroyo the TRO.

Gonzales said the senate was not sure that the prosecution had tested its case.

Gonzales said the process in court by Sereno is a factual witness should Corona decide to testify during the defense presentation of evidence.

"I don't think she has certain nature before testifying now that Corona has stated her part to defend himself," he said.

Gonzales also said that senate judges should consider Corona for his "defense by media publicity" after the prosecution had been reasonably accomplished by doing the same.

Minority Leader Senator Juan Ponce Enrile said Corona is entitled to all the rights available to him.

Aquino's appointees, Associate Justices Antonio Carpio and Presbitero Velasco Jr., have refused to testify in the impeachment trial.

Carpio said the administration spoke earth, instead of pursuing his case before the media.

"What is happening is that the Chief Justice is obviously trying to explain to the public what his side of the issue is, except on the matter of the discrepancies in his SALN and the unreported assets that were brought up during the prosecution's case, in the impeachment trial," said Deputy spokesperson Abigail Valte.

"Whether his allegations will stand in court, or whether he will put himself on the stand to substantiate his allegations he is free to do. And we would like to see him make those allegations under oath," she said.

"Who, however, would not their confines are along Corona and allegations that the Aquino administration had sent representatives to persuade him to resign and to discuss the Hacienda Luisita case.

Saying she had no knowledge about the issue, Valte said she would not enter officials about it.

"After read the government has no information about Chief Justice against Corona's life.

But the government would be ready to provide Corona with additional security if he believes he needs it, she said.

Ed Gohsangan

Fil-Am girl leaves 'American Idol' judge J-Lo speechless

From page A1

know what to say" Lopez exclaimed during the show.

Twenty-finalist Jessica Sanchez, 17, of Chula Vista, California, is Mexican-American Filipino Gilbert, originally from Tarlac, and Filipina mother Letitia, originally from Bataan. Her grandfather Eddie Ingco is a retired United States Navy sailor from Bataan, while her mother is from Pampanga.

'Pride of Bataan'

In Orani, Bataan, the first thing that catches a visitor's attention is a banner in Apalit, Pampanga's capital, Virgie Ingco says. Reads Pinoy Sanchez, The Pride of Bataan. Philippines," signed by Sanchez's grandparents.

The neighbors said they too proudly await a visit from Sanchez, who said in an earlier interview that she plans to visit the country soon. The local government of Orani is reportedly preparing a grand homecoming for their "idol."

The eldest of three children, Jessica first took center stage on 11-year-old gold and was, by her own account, "terrified" to perform "Lovesick Girl" from the movie "Dreamgirls" on the Top 12 Idols night.

The nine ousted Steve Wonder's catalogue and the women chose from Houston's Jaffe, a tribute to the singer who died on Feb. 11, on the eve of the Grammy Awards, at age 61.

"I fell in love [on] You" was played as the conclusion of Houston's New Jersey church Fountain of Faith.

4800's episode

The "American Idol" finalists performed in the first three rounds to 4800's episode. In a twist, the male and female singers who ranked lowest in the audience vote were announced on elimination night and the judges decided which of the two would be saved.

Eliminated was Jessica Ramsey, a "wild card" finalist chosen by the judges to join the Top 13 last week. He received instead Joshuah Ivan, the judges for his rendition of Stevie Wonder's "Ribbon in the Sky."

Others who impressed the judges included Joshua Ledet, 19, of West Monroe, La., with his version of "I Think"; Hollie Cavanaugh, 18, of McKinney, Texas, with "All the Man I Wanted"; Deandra Dyer, 20, of Miami Gardens, Texas, with "Lately," and Phillip Phillips, 21, of Leesburg, Ga., with "Superstition."

Arrested's Jeanbaptiste Tyler offered Phillips an intriguingly unpredictable review.

"You're a very interesting character, man. You put a lot of [expletive deleted] in your voice. There are no words for it. You just are. You know what I'm saying," Tyler said.

Steven Lopez's version of "Where Do Broken Hearts Go" was another standout.

"Feels a country girl ... But what you just proved, you can sing our song," Jackson told the 20-year-old from Brandon, Miss.

The judges were not unanimously kind.

Rhianna Tiarrow, 20, of Charleston, S.C., who performed "Try Your Baby Tonight," fell short with the panel, which praised her talent but said what Lopez called her "unsure" performance.

Skylar Laine, 20, of Tampa, Fla., for her stirring in the way on "I Miss Holiday," Jackson said, and Tyler suggested she might better suited in the audience vote. All with support from Ryu Babasa, Inquirer Central Luzon

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2013

Teddyvic S. Melendres
Victor Francis T.J. Ochoa

Texters trip Energy in OT

Alaska keeps PBA team despite firm's stock sale

By Mluong K. Castillo

TALK 'N Text blew a 16-point third-quarter lead and needed overtime to hammer out a 113-106 victory over Barako Bull at the Cuneta Astrodome last night as the defending champion Tropang Texters crept closer to a playoff berth in the PBA Commissioner's Cup.

Ryan Reyes delivered on both ends in the opening minutes of overtime as the Texters won in 4-1 while dusting off its spare feet to 4of11 two nights ago.

"He is way off any kind of basketball shape," coach Chot Reyes said of Ryan Reyes, who has been in and out of the lineup for the Texters. "But tonight, he came up big for us."

Meanwhile, Alaska MBL team owner Wilfred Steven Uytengsu moments before tip-off cut the short game versus the Express, told the bayanan that he had "sold a chunk of (the Alaska company's) but will remain in the PBA."

Dutch dairy firm Royal Friesland Campina bought the shares of the Uytengsu family yesterday, increasing its stake in the Alaska Milk Corp. to 68.9 percent. Uytengsu will continue to call the shots in the company as president and chief executive officer.

"We will continue to win with honor," Uytengsu replied to the bayanan's question on whether he would keep the team on not.

The win, though, were the second heartstoppers brought down by the Ex-press after Marcus Douthit scored 23 points, grabbed 15 rebounds and had four blocks in a dramatic 88-83 decision.

Asi Li, which dropped down the Tex-tars on Wednesday, now is 3-2 overall with its second straight victory while the Aces dropped to a level 2-3 card.

Reyes finished with nine points, all of them coming from beyond the arc. He hit his last two with 49 seconds left, breaking a 100-all tie.

The first of those triples came after Reyes broke up a potential go-ahead play by pilfering the pocket of a driving Willie Miller.

The last Reyes triple came with 31.1 seconds left for 112-106.

Meanwhile, the elimination round goes on this round again today as Phoenix Fuel powers the Petro-Blaze to Hinoo who connect in Lapu-Lapu City.

TALK 'N Text's Ruby Williams (left) fouls Barako Bull's Jay Washington during the Texters' overtime win last night at the Cuneta Astrodome. ALVIN KASIBANG

PH Patriots, Beermen try to focus on game at hand

By Jasmine W. Payo

A WEEK after their messy showdown, the AirAsia Philippine Patriots and San Miguel Beer try to keep their tempers in check against opponents in the Asean Basketball League tonight.

The Patriots, hoping to rebound from another heartbreaking loss to the Beermen, are to meet today against the Indonesia Warriors with top scorer Anthony Johnson still on board.

With Johnson and two other players set to serve their suspension on Wednesday, the Patriots hope to make the most out of their home game in the 5 p.m. (6 p.m. in Manila) game at the Hidabaka Square in Jakarta.

"It would be very hard for us to win if the suspension was implemented in this game," said Patriots coach Glenn Capacio.

The Beermen, with two players also slapped with a one-game ban, similarly hope to take advantage of their outspoken lineup against the Chang Thailand Slammers at 6 p.m. at the Yuanen Sports Arena in Pudig.

After ruling the fight-marred duel against the Patriots, the Beermen (7-3) moved within striking distance of the lead shared by the Patriots and the Westports Malaysia Dragons (7-2).

Spirited Azkals yield by just 2 to N. Koreans

By Cedelf P. Tupaz

PYONGYANG—What was expected to be a blowout turned out to be a showcase of the Philippines' ability to absorb pressure from a top-level Asian side.

But a vastly superior North Korea struck two quick-fire second-half goals to take the fight out of the Azkals, 3-0, at the start of Group B play Friday in the AFC Challenge Cup at the Hanchwok Stadium.

Goalkeeper Neil Etheridge saved a penalty in a highlight of a heroic defensive display by the Azkals in the first half before the North Koreans finally broke them down with a torrid second-half assault.

"We fought very bravely and I'm very satisfied," said Azkals coach Michael Weiss.

"We have to take all the con-text into considerations. 2-0 is a very good result against a team ranked 44 places higher than us. With the means that we have, we could not challenge a team that's year and a half ago played in the World Cup.

8th Stats-chel, the hardworking midfielder, and substitute Jang Kuk-chol scored 11 minutes apart and the 2010 World Cup qualifiers kept the Azkals at bay the rest of the way with their quick passing and combinations plays.

A frenzy-scale 34th minute morning without the ball, Oda Reed a header past Etheridge in the 56th minute as the Azkals gave weary defending their left flank, before Jang delivered the socket punch—a volley—as Etheridge fumbled a high cross.

Jang looked to have actually held on to Etheridge in the loudspy to the goal that forced the Pulliam FC western goalkeeper to lose grip.

North Korea dictated the game as the heavy favorite, having reached the World Cup finals in 2010 in South Africa.

The visitors' coach, Yun Jong-su, was impressed by the Azkals' fighting performance.

"There's much development and I think they played beyond our expectations," said Yun.

It was the Azkals who opened up the first real chance in the match.

Phil Younghusband was released by a great ball from Angel Guirado but his right-footed effort from a right angle was blocked by North Korea's veteran goalkeeper Ri Myong-guk.

It was one easy enable from there for North Korea as it didn't stop on the Azkals' goalmouth.

Etheridge was the Azkals' hero, though. The pressure paid off for North Korea as Jang Myong-il looked to have gone down easily on a tackle by Misagh Bahadoran, prompting Indian referee Pratap Singh to point to the penalty spot in the 18th minute.

But Jong-chol sent Etheridge the wrong way but the Azkals got a reprieve when the North Koreans were adjudged to have encroached inside the box too early. Pak took it from and hand but Etheridge prevailed, palming the ball away.

Sexual harassment case vs 2 players hurts team

By Cedelf P. Tupaz

KOREANDO—With two of its players hounded by allegations of sexual harassment, the Azkals' build-up for the AFC Challenge Cup was thrown off track by the controversy, team manager Dan Palanca admitted Friday.

"The players concerned are quite bothered," Palanca said just before the Azkals faced defending champion North Korea here.

"I mean they know their family members are hurt by this incident. What bothers the most is that they did a normal thing."

Palanca said the case filed by match commissioner Criry Sumse before the Asian Football Confederation against Lorenz Moy and Philippe Angel Guirado could have been a simple case of "misinterpretation."

"It (the controversy) has caught everybody by surprise," Palanca said.

"What hurts more is that people already assume that it's one and that (Rainier) had been harassed. I think it was just a misinterpretation of what she heard in the dressing room."

Based on his own investigation, Palanca said the players were joking among themselves when Rainier heard what the damsel was a query over her breasts from Moy.

Guirado, the manager said, was actually wearing shorts, not underwear, during the investigation.

"Now that I have been able to talk to everybody in the team, it strengthens my conviction that this is all but a major misunderstanding," Palanca said.

"There was actually a conversation among the players prior to (Rainier's) arrival. The players were consistent with their assertions. Angel Guirado was actually wearing shorts. When (the Azkals' locker) the players were in various states of undress, just like in any other locker room."

Palanca added: "They (players) were talking among themselves. There was a common made by Denis Wolf about the flatness of Carla (De Morgan) chest, to which Lorenz Moy replied, 'Just because you see Ting-Ting you say those to Carla,' or something to that effect. Denis and Carli even hugged each other. It was all a joke."

PALAPE: Lori's trust

The manager lamented that some quarters have already made conclusions about the incidence even before the investigation could end.

"All I'm saying is that, the players have submitted to the (investigative) process," Palanca said. "What's wrong with waiting for the result? Will the incident change if you talk to the media now."

Princess, Gio rule the roost

PRINCESS Superal shot a four-over par 76 in the final round to romp away with the girls' crown and Gio Gamboa carded a 73 to capture the Class A boys' title at the Philippines Falcon Cup Invitational Championships in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

Superal wound up with a 72-hole total of 291 to beat Thailand's Benyapa Niphatsophon, who closed with a 75 for 295 at the Palmer course of the Orchard Golf and Country Club.

Gamboa, a member of the champion Lilo Country Club in the mural PBL Interclub in Davao, had a 289 total, two shot of Taiwan's Pang Pei-hsiang's 74-295.

Leading by seven after 54 holes, Superal just cruised along on the final day of the tournament organized by the Junior Golf Association of the Philippines.

Superal and partner Bianca Pagdanganan (77) of Team Philippines II beat the team places by one shot in the 72nd day of Benyapa and Suvanee Thanapolboonrueng, 598-597.

Gamboa and Raphael Tolentino were also pipped by Thais Chanasthak Dejkamsongsakul and Saris Tassanawat.

The Gamboa-Tolentino tandem joined together a 151 for 304, seven off the 587 of Chanasthak (79) and Saris (72).

Other reports: Carnation Pua, 73-73-76—222, Michaela Cojuangco, 77-77-78—232, Lois Ann Arago (82-82), Bianca Bianca Ace (79-82-84—245).

Feverish Pagunsan three strokes off WGC lead

MIAMI—Jeric Pagunsan fired a three-under 69 Thursday to stay three shots off the lead in the World Golf Championships-Cadillac Championship despite terrible playing conditions at Doral's Blue Monster.

Australian Adam Scott dealt difficult, windy conditions to enter a share of the first-round lead with Jason Dufner with a 66.

Pagunsan, the Filipino ace recently given the Presidential Achievement Award by the Philippine Sportswriters Association, had to deal with even worse problems as he battled bouts between showers and hail to play only nine holes in the first round.

But he plodded on and found himself in a better position than current world No. 1 Rory McIlroy and former No. 1s Tiger Woods and Luke Donald.

Pagunsan birdied holes 7, 10 and 11, dropped a shot on 12 and then got it back on the 16th for his three-under card, one of only 11 scores for the day that broke 70.

Scott, making just his third start of the season, had four birdies in his first nine holes and finished with five birdies and an eagle against one bogey in his six-under par 66.

Argentina's Andres Gallegos rubbed four of his seven birdies on his last nine holes, including a birdie at his last, the par-three ninth, where he hit his tee shot within three feet of the pin to join Scott atop the leaderboard.

"When you're in the fairway on a day like today, you get a chance to hit it somewhere near the hole, give yourself an opportunity," Scott said.

McIlroy, making his first start since according to number one in the world rankings, opened with a one-over par 73 that included a three-putt bogey.

"It was a pretty tricky day but obviously there was good scores out there," said McIlroy.

Woods, who finished runner-up to McIlroy at the Honda Classic on Sunday, enjoyed in the eagle at his opening hole but found the going tougher the rest of the way en route to an even par 72.

"It was just a difficult day," Woods said. "The wind was blowing pretty around, and it made for a very challenging round."

England's Donald, supplanted by McIlroy atop the world rankings this week, headed another group of eight players on 71.

AFP

PAGUNSAN

Korea, China aces dominate U-14 tilt

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ITC all-Koreans in boys and all-Chinese in girls.

The regional sporting superpowers flexed their muscles and stormed their singles brackets won't go to anybody else as they sent three players to the finals of the ITC-AIT Asia 14-under tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Top seed Keenan Oh Chan-young handled off-getting fourth seed Dong Tingbil of China, 7-5, 6-1, even as compatriot and No. 3 seed Hyung Yun-seong forged a hard-earned 7-6 (7-4), 6-4 triumph over second-seeded Tiu crusher Wu Tong-lin.

Oh, a lean, hard-hitting 15-year-old, impressed his type of game against Zhang so long as the his first ever final appearance. Ranked 1,870th in the world, Oh previously made quarterfinals in similar ITF tourneys in Korea.

But Chang will be the dark horse after the 13-year-old's upset of Wu. Chang is ranked 616th in the world in singles and is in his first final stint after making the top 16 in Jakarta last November.

Oh vowed to give it his best against Chang but added that staying power and stamina will spell the difference as the match is scheduled under the scorching sun.

In girls action, Chinese top pick Li Yuxi took the long, hard route to dispose of hard-fighting Indian Prajakta Sadhanadi, 6-7 (3), 7-5, 6-1, 7-5, even as Gao Shiji battle broke a scare in beating compatriot Tan Qiaoning, 6-1, 6-1.

Li had an error-laden match against Sadhanadi and practically succumbed to seven an opener. Gao was in top form in the semifinals, needing just 55 minutes to wrap things up.

The four-week event is sponsored by Philippine Tennis Academy, Mercuries Foundation, Dunlop Foot Balls, Magnolia Purewater and Gatorade Push Shootout.

Magic find groove, halt Bulls streak

ORLANDO Magic star center Dwight Howard goes up for a slam dunk. AP PHOTO

ORLANDO—Stung by an embarrassing loss to lowly Charlotte earlier in the week, the Orlando Magic responded in the best possible fashion with a 99-94 win over the NBA-leading Bulls in Chicago on Thursday.

Dwight Howard powered his way to 29 points and 16 rebounds as the Magic made amends for Tuesday's 16-point debacle to the Bobcats and put an end to the Bulls' eight-game winning streak.

Orlando (28-33) led by as much as 18 in the first half but found themselves trailing 91-89 with two minutes remaining when Howard dunked to tie the score and Ryan Anderson sealed off five straight points to help the visitors secure the win.

The Magic last faced Chicago with 26 points while Derrick Rose struggled to just 17 and made only 6-of-22 shots from the field.

One night earlier, Rose made a third in time expired to help the Bulls beat Milwaukee but he could not remember when this most.

The Bulls (39-19) had not lost since Feb. 18 and still lead the Miami Heat by 1 1/2 games in the race for the Eastern Conference lead.

The home team climbed out of their early deficit by ending the first half with a 13-3 run. Anderson scored his team's first eight points of the fourth and then eventually nudged in front but could not make his shots down the stretch.

"Role (Brown) had some wake-up calls on his shirt," Chicago coach Tom Thibodeau said. "I can live with that all day."

At Phoenix, Jared Dudley scored 12 of his 19 points in a 49-point first quarter and the Suns held on to beat Dallas, 99-94, for their first victory over the Mavericks in nine attempts.

Grant Hill scored 18 of his 25 points in the second half for Phoenix, but missed two free throws with 12.4 seconds left. Dallas had two chances after that, but Rodrigue Beaubois missed a driving layup, then couldn't hit an 18-foot jumper in the buzzer.

Reuters, AP

Letran gains Petron semis

MANDAUE—Letran 1 turned back University of the East, formally booking a semifinal slot in the 2012 Petron Ladies' Basketball Tournament at the La Salle Health Science Institute Complex here.

Gena Andaya and new pasmo Jonah Jane Espelita finished with two wins and two losses in Group B, after a 21-12 triumph over UE standouts Kimberly Dawn Bitoco and Jessica Dawn.

Their schoolmates, Letran 21 Jeanine Mae Tadeo and Melissa Gayle recorded a 2-2 slate at the end of their Group A effort, pulling away from Bicol College's Janine Bilacion and Celine Malones, 21-16 in the second game of the scorcher.

Andaya and Espelita entered a best-of-three semis showdown with last year's Battle of Guadalupe winner Janice Perez and Presidents Cup of the University of the East.

Tadeo and Gayo managed a duel with the La Salle Bienvenido pair of Jennifer Montines and Gizelle Bonito.

PSC shelves 'priority' plan

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission has decided to shelve its program to prioritize just 140 athletes and instead work some 600 more at least until March 25.

PSC chair Ritchie Garcia yesterday said they wanted to give the 140 athletes, gold winners in the last Southeast Asian Games, enough time to undergo physical fitness examinations.

"We want to make sure that they are fit because if we are sending them P60,000 salary a month, we must be assured that they are in top shape and not having injury or sickness," said Garcia.

There were reports, however, that the PSC was trying to appease the disgruntled athletes who are reportedly planning to stage a rally against the "priority athletes" program.

For the meantime, the 140 athletes will get the usual salary they are getting, while the others said by the program will still be in the payroll for at least one more month.

Garcia added that within a month's time, they will try to figure out ways to do the athletes in team sports like basketball, volleyball, softball, baseball and ringsiders.

HARBOUR CUP FINAL

Garcia, Blacks duel Blues for crown

ALBAY: Gavin Reed cap to his billing, powering his Blacks to a 8-2 win over the Yellows on Thursday and into the finals of the first Harbour Governor's Cup Polo Cup in Makati.

Sporting jersey No. 3 without a reserved for the team's star player, the 19-year-old Garcia knocked in three goals in the first two chukkers to usher the fight out of the Yellows in the event also sponsored by Dusit Hotel and Residences and Rockford and Hang.

With the win, the Blacks forged a 4th clash with the Blues tomorrow.

"We could have scored more but we reserved it for our one chukkers," he said. "Overall, it was a good and competitive match."

Garcia's duel with the Blues' Jake Dobel and Alfonso Aguayo, scions of polo patrons Bilgi and Gregge Aranda, is expected to add color and drama to the title showdown.

The star 4's going to be tight," said Harbour Centre CEO/governor Mikee Romero. "Both teams boast of explosive attacks."

The Blues claimed the first 6-goals berth by downing the Reds, 13-8.

A graduate of Ateneo high school, Garcia is now a member of the Dalahood Polo Club in Chicago, Illinois that twice had won the Governor's Cup 6-Goal tournament.

The cool and calculating Gavin also grabbed four goals to add to his Buscemi.

Andrew Daley scored the Blacks' first goal, while Jimmy Bonifacio accounted for the Yellows' second and final goal, a 30-meter bolt after the dying seconds of the 20-minute game.

The High Goal on Sunday will pit the Reds of Romero and Bilgi Dobel against the Blues of former national polo team captain Antonio Tobias. The other Red riders are Ishmar Montilla and Anthony Garcia.

Tobias will team up with Gee Aguayo, Cole Aguayo and Tomi Blondis.

TMI Blacks' Jim Donovan flies away off the Yellows' Jon Johnson Thursday's Harbour Centre-Ala Asia polo match in Nasugbu. Donovan delivered two goals en route to by Arthur Garcia in the Blacks win, 8-2.

AUTS karters honored

AUTS Racing capped a successful 2011 karting season by snatching its four drivers berths in the 9th Golden Wheel Awards recently at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Young racers Brian Thorp and Gabe Tayao along with crossover Jolen Cuenca and lady Lance Yvana Camargo each received their respective Golden Wheel karting trophies following their major feats for AUTS Racing.

Thorp and Tayao, who trained under karting champion Jeff Villalon, emerged SQ Cadet Hawks Overall Champion and SQ Cadet Hawks first runner-up respectively despite joining the Senior Super Karting first hit late.

Cuenca and Camargo also finished strongly in the competitive Formula SL Expert class.

"We're proud of the team's achievements last season," said AUTS manager Marvin Alvarado.

AUTS Racing team during the Golden Wheel Awards (from left) Manager Marvin Alvarado, Gabe Tayao, Yvana Camargo, Jolen Cuenca, Brian Thorp and owner Indy Villalon

Ynares hosts big derby

SOUTHWESTERN stars will clash it out in an impressively tough derby at the Ynares Sports Arena on March 13.

The derby will be hosted by Bebot Uy and Bo Fiorello Garcia.

Expected to lead the field are Beng Placido, Joey and Bobet Sales, Lauren Henry Tan, George Asuncion, Adonis Jalao Jr., Bebot Bonet, JV Magsaysay, and Eddie Orillaza Jr.

The special guests will battle with regular NCA members Charlie "Bong" Ang, Gerry Ramos, Tommy Chua and Dong Bala Cruz, among others.

In the derby last Feb. 26 hosted by Henry Ramos, the entry of Ely Lorbes and Ben Sobrevega bested all others to emerge champion with 5 points.

The next NCA derby will be on March 20. Tuesday, to be hosted by Ito Tuazon, Homer Mercado, and Lito Orillaza. All NCA derbies are sponsored by Sagupaan Complexes.

La Salle, Ateneo lead Eagle Ridge volley field

LA SALLE and Ateneo are in 10 other squads in the 2nd Eagle Ridge volleyball championships today and tomorrow at the Sports Clubhouse of the sprawling Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Cavite.

Ateneo is out to spoil an expected showdown between Far Eastern U and UST. Other teams include Adamson, La Salle Dasmariñas, Holyrood E, St. Dominic Savio and University of Perpetual Help in the men's division.

La Salle, meanwhile, gets the top billing in the ladies action after emerging as this year's new UAAP champions.

The event free to the public is sponsored by Li Electronics, Manny Pepsi, GMA Club Shares, Microtel, BMW God Gas Centre, Inc., and others.

Sy Top Choice
Ali Santos Area Pool

GMA Int'l acquires ABL airing rights

GMA International recently acquired the rights to broadcast the 2012 Asean Basketball League (ABL) via GMA Network's Direct TV International.

The ABL features the Bangkok Johnsa, Chong Thailand Slammers, Indonesia Warriors, Singapore Slingers, Saigon Heat, Malaysia Dragons, Westport Malaysia Dragons, and the Kelantan Malaysia Piranas, for league's inaugural campaign.

Games will air on weekends, starting March 17.

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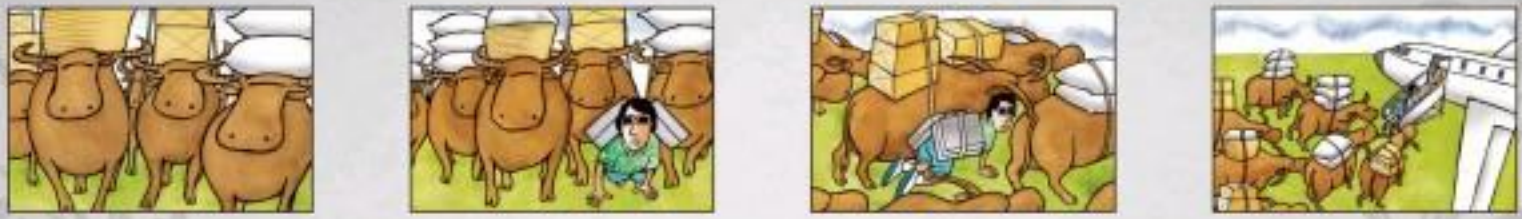

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Editor Joseph Voltaire L. Contreras

Ombudsman junks raps vs Echiverri

Preventive suspension order against 3 other Caloocan City officials lifted

By TJ Burgonio

He's glad it's all over

Ombudsman Conchita Carpio Morales has dismissed the charges against Caloocan City Mayor Enrico Echiverri and three other city officials for their alleged mismanagement of the city employees' pension contribution in the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS).

Echiverri said he felt vindicated following the dismissal of the charges.

"Finally, the truth has come out regarding the GSIS issue. Throughout this ordeal, I've always held my head high because I knew in my heart that I did no wrong," Echiverri said in an e-mail to the Inquirer yesterday.

In a March 4 resolution, Morales also dismissed the complaints filed against city treasurer Evelina Gamia, city budget officer Jessica Garcia and city accountant Edna Cruzon, saying there was "no substantial evidence to hold respondents either administratively or criminally liable."

She also ordered the lifting of the preventive suspension imposed on them.

Morales said the complainant, Vice Mayor Edgar Erice, had failed to prove that the respondents carried out the act "with manifest corruption" and "clear intent" to violate the law.

"Complainant bears the onus of proving that respondents' questioned acts were attended with manifest corruption, clear intent to violate the law or flagrant disregard of established rule. This he failed to discharge," she said.

Erice filed charges against the four city officials for violation of the GSIS Act, Sec. 2 (e) of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act and for grave misconduct and conduct prejudicial to the best interest of the service.

In the resolution, the Ombudsman said Echiverri had "taken steps to ensure the prompt payment of the city's current premium contributions and to update its remittances to the GSIS." PGB Atty. Alma C. Callejo

New fare hikes for jeeps, buses expected next week

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE GOVERNMENT is set to announce new provisional rates for public jeepney and buses nationwide following the steady rise in fuel prices.

The Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) was expected to officially announce a hike in jeepney rates—expected at around 50 centavos per passenger—on Friday, but postponed it to next week.

"We decided to make the announcement together with the release of the provisional increase for bus companies," an LTFRB official who refused to be named said on Friday.

"The board has already approved the new rates, but the approval of the Secretary is still needed," the official said, referring to Transportation and Communications Secretary Jose Jesus Mirand "Mar" Roxas II.

Transport groups representing jeepney drivers and operators earlier threatened to go on strike if the hikes were not approved by the government.

Meanwhile, bus companies that applied for a hike in the rates were the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association, which represents Metro Manila buses, and the Southern Luzon Bus Operators Association and Provincial Bus Operators Association, representing buses outside the metropolis.

Petitions for an increase in bus fares were filed last year but the LTFRB has refused to act on them.

Mandaluyong fish vendors hit 'holdup gang's' tactics

By Ruth Tinchat

HUGE yet, heard of a sidewalk holdup?

A group of fish vendors in the Mandaluyong City market believe they have fallen victim to a robber they could only call "a headless holdup."

Three vendors, cornered by the side of an alley clogged with stalling tricycles, between the Manning Palengke and the Triple A Market, continue to lose their merchandise to a scheming group allegedly identified with the Magat Salvador.

The vendors complained that a gang, headed by a certain "Edwin," described as tall, dark, balding, would swoop down on their stalls without warning and vent every their merchandise wholesale.

Last week alone, Teresita Marcial Jimeno, 58, said she lost all her fine-class squid for sale, costing a total of P1,000, to the group.

Anyway male vendor said he, together with other vendors down the alley, had been similarly victimized with unfolding regularity.

"Minsan dalawang beses kung kaapin (Sometimes they strike twice a week)," explained farmers, who said she got their wares on credit, care of the 5-6 lending monopoly in and around the Tiger City market area.

These vendors have the necessary permits properly displayed. They swear they never sell past the defined boundaries, meaning they could not be charged with illegal vending.

But the striking group would reportedly ridicule badly in sway and seize the merchandise, without issuing a receipt.

After the last raid, Jimeno said they rushed to city hall to pay fines, if they had indeed violated an ordinance, to recover their merchandise.

"Aide, dinagay sa DAVO (After the payments DVO were told our items were sent to the DAVO Office)," Jimeno said.

The DAVO Office denied it had received the confiscated fresh items.

The vendors said they could not do anything as the raiders operated by using the Mayor's Office as a shield.

Egay Mendiola, a civic worker from Barangay Poblacion, said he had been told a box to selling P30,000 was carried away in the getaway car and Ginday.

New landmark rises in San Juan landscape

By Miko Calleja

SOON enough, the city government of San Juan will open to the public what its officials call a "dream building," a two-story building complete with a helipad on the top floor.

The building will house the new city hall, sitting on one hectare adjacent to the historical Pinaglabanan Shrine and a stone's throw away from the city police headquarters and the fire station.

"All it needs are just the finishing touches," Cluver Pardinez, San Juan public information officer, told the lawyers.

Pardinez said that after the construction work is over by March 30, city hall employees will start moving in to the new building, which Councilor Ronnie Gonzales considers as the city's "dream building."

The "dream building," as city architect Ramon Gonzales calls it, was constructed on what used to be a depressed community in Barangay Caimito de Jesus populated by more than 2,000 families.

Work on the new city hall began in 2010 when resistance among the Caimito de Jesus residents, who were asked to leave the area to make way for the resettlement areas in Taytay and Rodriguez in Rizal province, was still starting to gain ground.

Since 2010, the revised structure has undergone land reclamation had taken place in the barangay-each time the local government carried out demolition operations.

The city government also came under attack from militant groups which claimed that local officials had prioritized infrastructure over the welfare of the residents.

But Pardinez said relocating the informal settlers had also been a tough job for city officials who said it was not easy convincing them to move into new houses built for them in Rizal.

"The more we can stay than for the meantime, there won't be any relocation for the remaining families who refuse to budge," she said, referring to the government's plan to have a reclamation on demolitions in Barangay Caimito.

Gonzales said the benefits of having a new city hall outweigh its costs.

"This is triple the size of the old building. Before construction, the new one, we considered the fact that all people going in and out of city hall," he said.

The architect said that since 2006 when San Juan became a city, the old building on N. Domingo Street had been too cramped for its employees and their offices had to transact business at city hall.

It even could not accommodate the satellite offices for national government agencies because of lack of space, Gonzales said.

A SPACIOUS, all-white building housing San Juan's new city hall is expected to open its doors for business in April. An additional feature is the helipad located on the top deck. JOEY MENDOZA

"We designed city hall according to the city's needs. On the first floor are offices frequented by our residents like the treasury and assessor's offices," he added. At the center is an atrium which will serve as a "shared hanging area."

Gonzales said they made the city hall look "old and historic," since San Juan is a historical city.

The Pinaglabanan Shrine, which is located in San Juan, commemorates the first battle of the Filipino revolutionary group Katipunan in 1896 against the Spanish colonizers.

"But the design inside city hall is modern, for resilient and convenience," Gonzales said.

There will also be a 5,000 square-meter parking lot, for more spacious than the old one.

Pinaglabanan Shrine employee Nilda Perina, a former Barangay Caimito de Jesus resident said now a Taytay resident, said the sight of the new city hall was enough to make her feel proud.

But for the new city hall is a legacy that the Estradas, who have been ruling the city for decades, will leave behind.

San Juan Jose Ejercito Estrada is "Erap country" ever since Joseph Estrada became mayor in 1967, and eventually becoming estates, vice president and president.

The mayor's seat has since been occupied by his son Jinggoy Estrada, now a senator, and JV Ejercito, now San Juan representative. In the 2010 elections, JV's mother, Guia Gomez, won as mayor.

Unlike Pedro, however, Arnold Repique, president of Samata Homeowners Association (SHA) in Sitio Macalibing Neighborhood, an urban poor group in San Juan, doesn't welcome the new additions to the city's landscape.

"It should be called city hall, our city hall. It's ironic to have what looks like a White House-inspired city hall when San Juan is only a small city," he said.

Daza in-law told to answer homicide rap

By Jaime M. Laurello

THE JOINT DEFENSE of former Quezon City Rep. Nanette Castelo-Daza has been told to answer the charges filed against him for the shooting of Daza's former boyfriend, Noel Deniz Sr., on Feb. 10.

Assistant City Prosecutor Leonardo Joel Gonzales gave Romeo Allan Rubes, a Bulacan provincial board member, until next week to answer Branch 13 of the his counter-affidavit to the allegations.

Rubes was also required to appear on that day at 10 a.m. during the preliminary investigation of the case for his alleged participation in Deniz's death.

In yesterday's preliminary hearing, the lawyer of the Deniz family told Gonzales about a memorandum from Justice Secretary Leila de Lima on a separate probe by the National Bureau of Investigation.

Deniz was shot inside De Daza home in Barangay Teachers Village West at 8:45 p.m. Rubes, Daza's son-in-law, is now facing homicide charges.

Daza's children have claimed that their father was murdered in her area shortly after 11 p.m.

The Daza camp, on the other hand, said Rubes only acted in self-defense as Deniz allegedly threatened their family.

Hazing case suspect denies being member of fraternity

By Jeannette I. Andrade

ONE of the fraternity members charged with the death of San Beda law student Marvin Reglos Jr. denied yesterday at the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) in close his name and to drop dust he is a member of the Lambda Rho Beta fraternity.

The alleged hazing victim was a neophyte of the fraternity.

Accompanied by his law brothers from Gamma Delta Epsilon of the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Faculty of Law, Christian Adobo maintained his innocence following the filing of a murder charge against him and 17 others in the Manila City regional trial court.

Although he refused to speak with the media, his fraternity brothers said that while it was true that Adobo had paid for a reservation at the Coalition's Place, went in Antipolo City, site of the alleged hazing, it was not for the Lambda Rho Beta fraternity.

Lawyer Galileo Angeles said reports that Adobo had deliberately reserved the resort from 10 p.m. of Feb. 18 to 7 a.m. of Feb. 19 for a meeting to plan the Gamma Delta Epsilon's 54th anniversary celebration.

He also claimed that Adobo is neither a San Beda student nor is he a member of the Lambda Rho Beta fraternity.

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He also claimed that Adobo is neither a San Beda student nor is he a member of the Lambda Rho Beta fraternity.

"There was no sponsored incident that happened or that are noticed. No hazing happened in Cubao (resort). We were there. We had our meeting," Angeles maintained, adding that only Gamma Delta Epsilon members were at the resort.

NBI-ISD head and lawyer Bonifacio Ilas told the lawyers that they had yet to confirm the claim of the Gamma Delta Epsilon members.

"We have to verify their statement. We also have to verify Adobo's claim that he is a member of that fraternity and not of Lambda Rho," Ilas said.

The universe is a great equalizer

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

THERE is something wrong with our whole moral value relations, who are supposed to give you the benefit of the doubt, or come against you.

There is something wrong with Chief Justice Renato Corona and his wife Cristina because Cristina's relatives are even saying the couple cannot be trusted.

If these close to you say you cannot be trusted, how can you expect others, the public especially to trust you?

Corona should resign, even if he is found not guilty by the Senate impeachment court, because he longer has the people's trust.

* * *

Whatever Cl Corona says about President Noy's motive for wanting him out of the high court no longer matters.

If Corona can't be trusted in his dealings with his wife's relatives, how can the people trust him as their Chief Justice?

Corona should be above suspicion, like Caesar's wife.

* * *

First there was Ana Reza, Corona's niece, telling the inquirers that the Corona's several co-owners of the family's Basa-Gaddew Enterprises Inc. (BGEI) from them, using Ana's power.

At the time of BGEI's alleged takeover by the Coronas, Reza was a Malacañang official.

Ana's allegations were confirmed by sister Mary Ann, a Catholic nun who's 50 years old.

There's no reason to doubt Sister Mary's statements about the Coronas, why would a woman of the cloth, what's in the "spectators area" of her life, lie?

* * *

I supported Corona in his fight with President Noy because I read Ana Reza's interview with Inquirer reporter Cynthia Balana.

Let me repeat myself: I always root for the underdog and the oppressed.

But I'm withdrawing my support for the Chief Justice since he deserves what he's getting now.

The tables have turned; the erstwhile bully is now being bullied.

* * *

What we do to your fellow man comes back to you.

If you feed your hungry neighbor, the universe will give you more than as you can give more.

Conversely, if you kill your neighbor without justification, you have defiled your own life.

* * *

People who have been wronged should not think of revenge.

The universe is the great equalizer.

The law of karma works unerringly.

Look what's happening to the Coronas for approving dacia relations.

MetroBriefs

Tot dies in fall from condo

A EIGHT-year-old woman is under investigation for possible negligence after her 2-year-old son accidentally fell to his death from the balcony of a condominium unit on the fourth floor of Avida Tower 6 in Quezon, Barangay San Dionisio, Parañaque City, Eduardo Pido and Bernadette Arnaiz-Pido and Bernadette Arnaiz-Pido said Saturday at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday night in the bedroom of the unit, where Jaydan was with his mother, Andrea, a flight attendant for Philippine Airlines. The boy was lying on the bed when Jaydan apparently got up, walked towards the balcony and fell headfirst down near the pool, and suddenly fell straight down into the pavement on the ground floor. Jaydan was rushed to the Manila Medical Hospital, but was pronounced dead upon arrival. Authorities said the incident is still under investigation.

Free pap smear

WITH the growing number of women suffering from cervical cancer, Manila City has taken the initiative to protect their women residents from the fatal but curable disease. Free cervical screenings in the form of pap smear and acetic acid wash tests is being offered to low-income households as part of the city's observance of International Women's Month. The project is a brainchild of Mayor Joseph Estrada's wife Dr. Luisa Ejercito Estrada, chairperson of the city's Gender and Development Council. The tests are conducted every Wednesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 noon, at the city's lying-in clinic in Barangay San Jose. Buenaflor Reyna

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GREENBELT

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT DEBATE

Manila Mayor Alfredo Lim (left) stresses a point on the topic "What is an innovative city?" during his turn as one of the speakers on World Bank's symposium on Greening Urban Growth Capital Penang, Malaysia, Tues. Feb. 28-21. The debate was also simultaneously in sub-venues in four countries: South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines. Manila was the only local chief executive from the country who was invited to the global development debate. With him are other speakers from the United Kingdom, Malaysia and the United States.

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GREENBELT

Bin Laden's 3 wives charged with illegal entry to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan's interior minister said on Thursday that Osama bin Laden's three wives had been charged with illegally entering the country in the first legal action against them since they were taken from custody after their husband's death in May.

The minister, Rehman Malik, said the women's case had been sent soon to the National Immigration Agency and that they were being kept under house arrest in a "comfortable five-bedroom house" in the capital. Their children, however, may be sent back to their native countries if they want, he said in brief comments to reporters at a local arts gallery.

"A case has been filed against the wives but not against any of the children," Malik was quoted

BIN LADEN watching TV in the walled compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. He spent his last weeks in a house divided, amid wives from big suspicions. AP

in Pakistani news reports on Saturday.

However, he offered few details other than to say that the family had failed to provide any travel documents, and he declined to comment when the hearing against the wives took place or when a trial would begin.

The interior ministry made his comments a day after he testified before the official inquiry board, known here as the Abbottabad Commission.

During a six-hour briefing, Malik told the commission that the government had no news reports of Bin Laden's presence in the northern town of Abbottabad, which also is home to a military academy, Bin Laden's wives have told Pakistani prosecutors that the founder of al-Qaeda had been living there since 2005.

No official announcement has been made about when the inquiry commission, which is led by a former Supreme Court judge, is expected to finalize and release its findings. *New York Times/News Service*

Did jealous wife and deputy betray Bin Laden?

BANNU, Pakistan—Osama bin Laden spent his last days sidelined by al-Qaeda and slipping into dementia, possibly betrayed to the Americans by a jealous wife and his own deputy, a Pakistani investigator says.

Retired Brig. Shaukat Qadir says he spent eight months investigating the al-Qaeda chief's life in Pakistan, using his Army connections to visit the villa where he lived and died, and occurring access to confidential documents.

He says he spoke to three Services Intelligence (ISI) agents who interrogated Bin Laden's wives and saw their interview transcripts, all thanks to a close relationship with Pakistan's army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Kayani.

He has no evidence, but officials here have suggested that from a tantalizing image of a bird soon resigned to death and lie, stayed through one of his wives in an al-Qaeda plot—which, if true, would shed new light on the demise of the world's most-wanted man.

"Al-Qaeda decided to retire him in 2003. He was going mentally senile. From 2005, he had some kind of degenerative disease and was running up with hallucinations," Qadir said.

He says his theories are his alone, but admits he may have been manipulated by the Army and acknowledges that his account suits the ISI, which is still fending off suspicions of incompetence or complicity in sheltering Bin Laden.

Pakistan was humiliated by the covert American operation that killed the al-Qaeda leader in the early hours of May 2, practically on the doorstep of the country's elite military academy in Abbottabad where he lived for five years.

Bodyguards moved in to demolish the compound under the cover of darkness on Feb. 25, wholly observers took as a sign that Pakistani authorities want to consign the physical evidence of their embarrassment to oblivion.

Qadir says his investigation took him to the lawless tribal belt on the Afghan border, al-Qaeda's chief sanctuary for the past 10 years, whose far several during his time in the Army before his retirement in 1999.

Ayman al-Zawahiri, the Egyptian doctor often considered the real brains behind al-Qaida, "got fed up and decided to sideline" Bin Laden when the leader started losing his mental faculties after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

Qadir says Bin Laden moved frequently between hiding places in northern Pakistan before al-Qaida decided Abbottabad was the perfect spot and built a home shielded by a towering wall for him, two of his wives and their children.

Bin Laden moved into a bedroom on the third floor with his youngest and reputedly favorite wife, Amal Abdulfatah, the Yemeni he married in 1999 and who gave birth to two children in Abbottabad.

For years, Qadir believes, the family got on well, but things changed in March 2011 when Bin Laden's elder fourth wife, Khairia, suddenly turned up for the first time since the family was separated in late 2005. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Solar storm has minor impact on Earth

WASHINGTON—A solar storm that struck the Earth's magnetic field on Thursday spurred satellite and power problems as it slammed a glancing blow, although it could still intensify until early Friday. US space weather experts said. The geomagnetic storm ranging from the sun was initially expected to be strong enough to disrupt power grids, airplane traffic and space-based satellite navigation systems. But US government scientists on Thursday downgraded their prediction on the intensity of the storm—a big cloud of charged particles spawned by two solar flares. "At this point, it has been oriented in such a way that the net effect on the earth's magnetic field has been minor impact," said Joseph Kunches, a space weather specialist at the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Kunches said there were still some communication disruptions in the polar regions of the Earth that led airlines to reroute flights on Wednesday to avoid problems. The storm was not likely to be strong enough to disrupt GPS systems, he added. *Reuters*

4 more generals defect from Syrian Army

BEIRUT (NEWS)—Four more high-ranking officers have defected from the Syrian armed forces, a spokesman for the rebel fighters fighting against President Bashar al-Assad's rule, two retired generals said on Thursday. This news fled over the past three days to a camp for Syrian army deserters in southern Turkey, according to Lt. Khaled al-Hammad, a spokesperson for the Free Syrian Army (FSA). He told Reuters by telephone from Turkey the desertions bring to seven the number of brigadier generals who have defected. The seven are the highest-ranking officers to abandon Assad, and the rank is the fifth highest in the Syrian armed forces. Mustafa Sheikh was the third brigadier general to announce his defection. "We have six brigadier generals who are now in Turkey and Jordan, who has stayed to lead some battalions inside Syria," Hammad said. "We plan to form an advisory council to absorb these and any other high-ranking defections and this group will plan operations for the FSA." *Reuters*

Banks foreclosing on numerous US churches

LOS ANGELES—Banks are foreclosing on America's churches in record numbers as lenders grow increasingly less patient with religious facilities that have defaulted on their mortgages, according to new data. The surge in church foreclosures represents a new wave of distressed property seizures triggered by the 2008 financial crash, analysts say, with many banks no longer willing to grant struggling religious organizations forbearance. Since 2010, 210 churches have been sold after defaulting on their loans, with 60 percent of those sales coming after a lender-triggered foreclosure, according to the real-estate data-base company CoStar Group. In 2007, 138 churches were sold by banks, an annual record, with no sign that those mortgages foreclosures are abating, according to CoStar. That compares to just 24 sales in 2000 and only a handful in the decade before. The church foreclosures record all denominations across America, black and white, but with small- to medium-size houses of worship the worst. Most of these institutions have ended up being purchased by other churches. *Reuters*

Romney's lead over rivals widens

WASHINGTON—Republican presidential front runner Mitt Romney has built a lead in the race for this party's nomination that is effectively if slowly closing off his rivals chances of overtaking him in the battle to challenge President Barack Obama in November. The former Massachusetts governor's victories in six of 10 states that held votes earlier this week left former Sen. Rick Santorum and Newt Gingrich, the former speaker of the House of Representatives, with few paths to deny Romney the nomination. Critics on style and decisive fight at the Republican National Convention this August in Tampa, Florida. *AP*

A traveler's life

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And you answer.

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The WORLD

Editor Lorraine B. Queco

6 powers urge Iran to open site to nuclear inspectors

VIENNA—Six world powers demanded Iran keep its promise to let international inspectors visit a military installation where the UN nuclear watchdog believes explosives tests geared to developing atomic bombs may have taken place.

The joint call demonstrated unusual unity among the powers on Iran before a planned weekend of high-level talks as well as widening disquiet about the nature of Tehran's nuclear ambitions, with fresh threatening backdrop military unrest.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei welcomed assurances by UN President Barack Obama about a diplomatic solution "window of opportunity" offered by the talks, but said Washington's reinstatement moves to "betray the Iranian people in their hours" with interference were driven by delusion.

Bringing pressure on Iran in other cheats, the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany used a UN nuclear watchdog governors' meeting on Thursday to urge Tehran to grant prompt access to its Parchin military facility.

They voiced concern that an initial visit notched between Iran and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors in talks in January and February "excluding on the sector to relevant sites in Iran, requested by the agency ... We urge Iran to fulfill its undertaking to grant access to Parchin."

The message was reinforced by an unusually blunt statement from IAEA director Yukiya Amano accusing Tehran of sealing its "lid one handle" and refusing inspectors during their last two rounds of meetings.

Iran media reports this week suggested a visit to Parchin might still be granted but the IAEA said on Thursday Tehran had not responded a mutually agreed new trip.

Iran's IAEA ambassador, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, told reporters outside the board meeting that the suspicions stated about Parchin were "childish" and "ridiculous." He did not elaborate.

However, diplomats briefed by a senior IAEA official said Iran might be delaying an inspectors' trip to Parchin so that it could first erase any evidence of research with high-explosives tests relevant to designing a nuclear bomb.

They referred to a sequence of satellite pictures of the Parchin complex showing apparent changes to its structures.

The six powers made no mention of "sanctions" that Tehran's enemies in their statement at a closed cross-session of the 35-nation International Atomic Energy Agency governing board.

SATELLITE image of the military complex at Parchin, Iran. Above: continued at Below

But their language regarding Parchin and other aspects of Iran's shadowy nuclear program sent a message to Tehran of a cohesive stance within the group on how to diplomatically tackle the stand-off, which has stirred fears of war that could inflame the Middle East and send oil prices skyrocketing.

The six powers entered "urgent" about Iran's escalating campaign to enrich uranium, which can yield material for electricity or nuclear bombs and to scrap centrifuges in a sanctions-hardest-hit era in protection from air strikes.

Iran, facing sanctions for pulling in oil exports for shifting international demands to curb its nuclear activities, denies suspicions of a camouflaged attempt to develop atom bombs, insisting it wants nuclear power for electricity generation.

But hard, vowing Iran's suicide in advance as a mortal threat, double sanctions and diplomacy will mix in its exchanges over clear activity and is speaking more resolutely of retaliating to preemptive bombings of Iranian nuclear sites.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would give sanctions on Iran a chance to work and would not attack its nuclear installations in the coming days or weeks.

"I am not standing with a stopwatch in hand. It is not a matter days or weeks, but also not a matter of years. Everybody understands this," he told commercial Channel 10 in an interview from a extended interview.

Reuters

Gadhafi bid arms in Libyan embassies across the globe

TRIPOLI—The administration of ousted Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi was running a covert program to conceal weapons in Libyan embassies across the globe, a senior official in the new government said on Thursday.

The weapons included handguns, grenades and bomb-making materials and were shipped using the diplomatic bag. They may have been intended for use in retaliation for on Libyan dissidents abroad, or for operations against the embassies' host countries.

The scale of the scheme is emerging for the first time now as the leadership installed in last year's rebellion against Gadhafi takes over control of embassies and finds the arms, said Mahmoud Abdel Aziz, Libya's deputy foreign minister.

Gadhafi's officials shipped weapons to "many countries in Africa, in Asia, in Europe. So it's not only in two or three countries," Abdel Aziz told Reuters in an interview.

"Nobody knows what was the plan. Was it to address certain problems as far as the host country is concerned? Was it going to be used against Libyan authorities? Nobody knows," he said. "Honestly, everything is possible with the previous regime."

Asked if the weapons were concealed in Libyan embassies as part of a concerted operation conceived inside Gadhafi's administration, Abdel Aziz said: "I have no single doubt in my mind. No single doubt — no single doubt."

Ousted his 41 years in power, Gadhafi was frequently accused of exporting violence.

The 1988 bombing of a 103 airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie, and the 1984 shooting of British policewoman Yvonne Fletcher outside the Libyan embassy in London, are some of the most high-profile cases.

The fact that Gadhafi's officials were keeping weapons inside Libyan embassies as late as last year suggests he was still plotting killings abroad, even after he reassured Western states in 2003 and Western states reviewed diplomatic relations.

In the past six months, as Gadhafi loyalists lost control over foreign embassies, weapons discoveries have been reported in cabinets in the capitals of Greece, Egypt and Morocco.

Local media reports said the Athens find, in February, included 50 handguns, two submachineguns, 15 kg of plastic explosives, detonators, two hand grenades, silencers and silencing equipment.

The weapons uncovered in Rabat included booby-trapped vehicles and rocket-propelled grenades, a Moroccan newspaper reported.

The deputy foreign minister said the finds uncovered so far were only the tip of the iceberg, though he said he could not give a list of the countries where Libyan embassies had weapons caches.

He said he did not believe weapons were found in the missions in the United States, for that they were discovered in embassies in European Union states besides. Greece, as well as in other continents.

Reuters

Anvil Award Recognition for Gabay Guro 2 Years in a Row

as it Collects Two Awards in the Recently Concluded Ceremony

The Gabay Guro team headed by Corporation Dayo C. Recilla, with an Excellence award for the category PR Tools and a Merit award for the 2011 Anvil Awards.

PLDT-Smart Foundation's flagship program Gabay Guro finds itself at the receiving end of five years of positive energy. From the program's conception in 2007, employee-volunteers have worked with plenty of dedication to give much-needed support to teachers all over the country.

This good work was recognized at the recently concluded 2011 Anvil Awards where Gabay Guro earned Anvil Excellence under the PR Tools category, and its Teachers' Treasure Chest Training subprogram was likewise acknowledged with an Award for Merit. The Anvil Awards is organized yearly by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines and is known for honoring excellent public relations programs that give back to society.

In 2010, Gabay Guro garnered an Anvil Award for Merit in recognition of its achievements to improve education in a sustainable way. Gabay Guro appreciates the teacher's role in nation building and continues to do its part to support the noble profession with livelihood projects, scholarship grants, English proficiency exercises and literacy training programs, and broadbanding and computerization of public schools.

Since then, Gabay Guro's programs have also enriched the lives of hundreds of our nation's teachers. These in remote areas have been given access to technology and teaching tools. Housing has also been made more attainable. For Gabay Guro, this is just the start of a worthwhile undertaking that will mold future generations.

For more information about Gabay Guro, log on to www.gabayguro.com

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INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
March 9, 2012
42.590

STOCK MARKET
24.52

Chamber says state's revenue share highest in the world

By Dixie L. Lacar

LEADERS of the country's large mining firms yesterday decried government officials' portrayal of the mining industry as having been remiss in sharing their profits and avoiding the payment of the correct taxes.

In particular, the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines took exception to pronouncements of Cabinet members urging the suspension of a proposed 5-percent royalty to be levied on miners, on top of a projected 30-SS revenue sharing scheme with the government.

"The Philippine government is already getting the highest share from mining revenues among governments around the world," said Philip Bantoalibre, who heads the sensitive dependation of the country's largest mining firms. "And even we're banning that it seems more."

Ayala increases capex by 38% to ₱91B this year

Net income down 16% to P9.4B in 2011

By Doris C. Dumlao

INVESTED conglomerate Ayala Corp. saw a 16-percent decline in net profit last year to P9.4 billion mostly due to huge extraordinary gains in 2010 that could not be replicated.

But the Ayala group has committed to invest more for future growth and value creation, setting aside P91 billion for capital expenditures this year, an increase of 38 percent from its 2011 level. The bulk of this year's budget is for real estate development, network expansion in its telecom unit and acquisitions as well as investments in its water business.

In releasing its annual earning terms in 2011, Ayala's core net profit went up 16 percent, driven by record high net profit doubled up by its real estate, banking and water units as well as improvements in its telecom, international real estate and business process outsourcing businesses. (BPO), the company disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday. Extraordinary gains last year amounted to P611 million compared to P3.6 billion non-recurring gains booked in 2010.

"We are pleased with the solid performances of our core businesses in real estate, banking, telecommunications," said Ayala president Fernando Zobel de Ayala. "Their growth momentum has been very positive and their returns dominant in their respective industries despite intense market competition and a challenging economy."

"We expect the growth trajectory of our businesses to continue as we aggressively expand our products and services to address the needs of a still largely untapped segment of our population. We also expect our joint ventures and businesses to improve their profitability moving forward as they benefit from scale following their acquisitions initiatives the past years and as they benefit from cost optimization efforts," Zobel said.

The solid result of the core units paved recent earnings in 2011, particularly Ayala Land Inc's 35 percent to P7.1 billion), Bank of the Philippine Islands (up 13 percent to P12.8 billion) and Manila Water (up 7 percent to P4.3 billion).

Telecom unit Globe Telecom grew its core net income by 11 percent to P20 billion, outperforming the industry. Reported net income was flat at P9.03 billion from a year ago.

Earnings of Ayala's international real estate business turned positive last year due to gains realized from its exit strategy in ceramics at North Capitol land in Capital Asian Partners with The Rohatyn Group. The year 2010 also included provisions for certain assets in its UK operations.

Ayala also reported that the four investee companies under BPO holding company Level Enterprises had reduced net losses as cash flow benefited from greater scale and cost efficiencies.

Meanwhile, electronics manufacturing unit Integrated Microelectronics reported a 16-percent decline in net profit last year to P1.3 billion as high input costs ate up margins.

Stocks gains on Greece news

THE LOCAL stock index gained for a second session yesterday as Greece obtained crucial support from private bondholders on a debt deal, thereby easing earlier fears of a disorderly default.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index added 24.52 points or 0.3 percent to finish at 4,980.75. The gains in the last two days allowed the index to trim its weekly losses but nevertheless ended 18.38 points or 0.3 percent lower than a week ago.

In the morning, news of lower inflation in China and anticipation that Greece would complete a much-awaited private sector bailout kept the index buoyant but gains widened toward the end of the session when it was announced that 85.8 percent of private bondholders were participating in the debt restructuring deal. The investment sentiment that optimistic sentiment elsewhere in the region overboiling.

In the local market, the day's upswing was led by the industrial sector, which jumped 1.48 percent. All counters closed up except for Universal Robina Corp.

Value turnover amounted to P5.4 billion on relatively clamour from its previous days. Foreign trade there were by buy with the session of deep in trading activity ahead of the Holy Week, which falls in early April.

There were 95 advancers, while decliners closed 71 declines, while 46 stocks were unchanged.

PLDT, Ayala Power, SPC, JFC, SM, Petrocoa, BOI, JG Summit, DMCI, Robinsons Land and Globe added the PSE's climb. Other notable gainers were Security Bank and Goodyear. Doris C. Dumlao

Trans-Asia gives up 8 wind contracts

By Amy R. Remo

THE PHINMA-led Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Development Corp. relinquished eight wind energy service contracts but says other is launching as a way to re-accountable for developing wind for the future.

The company said in a regulatory filing that Trans-Asia Renewable Energy Corp. (Trerc), its wholly-owned subsidiary that focuses on renewable energy development (specifically wind), now has 12 wind energy service contracts left out of the 20 earlier granted by the Department of Energy.

"Trerc Subic, the remaining 12 wind energy service contract areas still comprise a sizeable portfolio of wind resources with an installed wind capacity of about 600 megawatts," Trans-Asia added.

Trans-Asia earlier said it expected to spend $1 billion for a 600-MW portfolio, based on the assumption that at least $2.5 million will be needed to produce a megawatt from a wind farm project.

The decision to pursue the wind power projects also rested on the decision of the fund-raise for all users as there would appear to be adequate of future cash flow since electricity end-users would be charged fixed amounts to cover the production of electricity from renewable sources. With this in place, utilities can spread the cost of these power among its customers.

The FIT system is also expected to encourage investors to go into renewable energy development and production. The mechanism also ensures stable pricing by energy from renewable sources.

In the meantime, Trans said it continues to its development activities for the 54-MW Nasi Lemery wind farm project in Guimaras as the company targeted to commit the planned power project from predevelopment stage to commercial stage.

"Negotiations on the terms and conditions of the engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract have been completed except for the final EPC price as the FIT rate for wind, [the application for] which was submitted on May 16, 2011, has yet to be approved by the Energy Regulatory Commission. The very attractive of the low tariffs project with the Board of Investments, was approved on June 11, 2011. This will enable the project to avail benefit of the investment incentives from the Renewable Energy Act of 2008," Trans-Asia explained.

Landco posts double-digit sales growth

DIVISALE property developer Landco Pacific Corp. reported a double-digit sales growth in 2011 as consumer sentiments and low interest rates contributed to fuel demand for residential units.

The privately held property developer reported that it generated sales amounting to P2.05 billion last year, about 58% higher than the P1.29 billion in sales reported in the previous year.

In comparison, Landco president said (P3.3 billion) Sime Darby Bhd said "2011 was a good year for the Philippine real estate industry and a busy and exciting year for Landco as well."

Landco reported that its top selling development in 2011 was Talisay Pavilion Residences, a resort-themed condominium in Davao, Mandaluyong, which posted P600 million. This was a 99-percent increase compared to 2010, earlier to the launch of Landco's newly-launched Balara Place (Tower 3) and following the launches of our tower in Gardens Place and another tower in Bryant Place.

Another noteworthy Davao Luisa in San Juan, Batangas, made P274 million, a 51-percent increase in sales following the grand launch and completion of its model unit. Sales from Plaza Adelina on Isaac Island in Davao was reported at P364 million following the completion of its Aqua Park, Wood-Grove Park, a luxury home community in San Fernando City, recorded sales of P305 million, up 14 percent compared to a year ago, following the completion of its Clubhouse Pool.

Gerry Rodrigo said he was optimistic that 2012 would remain favorable for the company and the entire real estate industry. "We look forward to more government infrastructure projects that will contribute to a positive outlook for this year." Doris C. Dumlao

Big miners decry gov't claims on taxes

From page B1

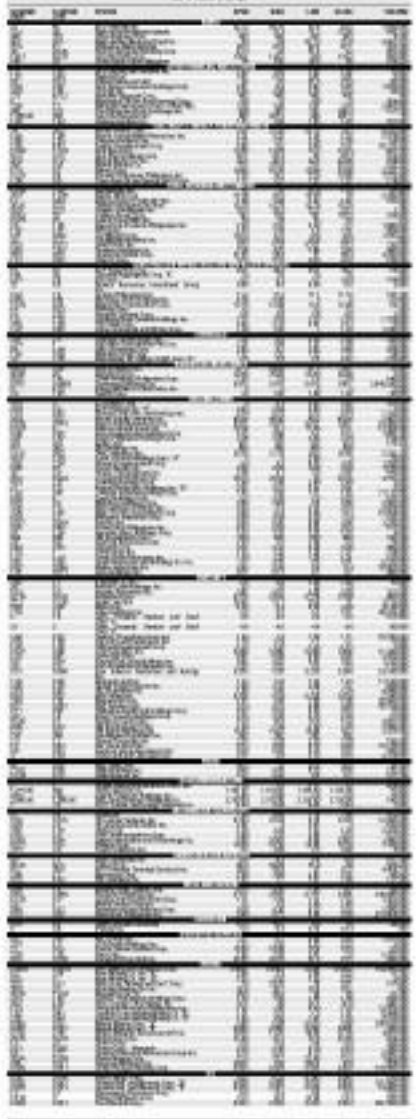
He stressed that a proposal to raise the government's share of mining revenues has to be stressed in the context of the country's overall competitiveness as a destination for mining investments vis-a-vis neighboring nations, which might offer more attractive conditions for foreign investors.

In a statement read at a media briefing in Makati City yesterday, industry leaders pointed to official data from the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources showing that since 2007, total taxes collected from the mining industry every year averaged more than P30 billion.

In 2010, the mining industry's total payments in terms of taxes, royalties, and fees reached nearly P40 billion.

"The government's gift stock more than just 0.5 percent excise tax," the locally-announced said. "The actual fiscal contribution of a mining company is not just the excise tax, but all other taxes and fees paid by the contractor as well, including corporate income tax, expenses duties on imports, value-added tax, capital gains tax, documentary stamp tax, and withholding tax on investments and other transactions."

"Additional local business taxes and fees are paid directly to the local government units where the mine is located," it added. "Mining companies operating in remote areas are also required to open the government-established socially regulated to 5 percent of the actual market value of the minerals produced, while those located in indigenous peoples' areas have to pay an additional 1 to 1.5 percent of the gross value of the minerals produced to the local inhabitants."



BOC tax take falls short of goal

Customs chief expects collection to improve starting March

By Raissa F. Dunlao

THE BUREAU of Customs collected P210.07 billion in taxes in February, only about 82 percent of its target but was 12.6 percent higher year-on-year.

The BOC is supposed to collect P255.07 billion last month. In February 2010, the agency's collection hit P186.62 billion.

In a statement, Customs Commissioner Ruffy Biazon said that the revenue shortfall last month was partly due to the month's long celebration of the lunar new year in China. Over 70 percent of Philippine imports originate there.

"We anticipated this as, historically, the BOC's revenue collection during the months of January and February are usually low," Biazon said.

"I'll expect the bureau's collections to improve beginning this month as not only is the Chinese New Year business-sluggishness over, but also because if [we] already made the personnel organization adjustments to maximize efficiency and utilization of BOC resources," he added.

Also last month, Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said he was "not yet comfortable" with the revenue agencies' good-earning process, especially that of the BOC's which is normally based on macroeconomic factors.

In January, the Cabinet-level Budget Development and Coordination Committee decided to lower the BOC's collection goal for 2012 to P547 billion from P610 billion.

The current system is spelled out in the Limited Attention Act of 2005, which puts a risk-assessment scheme where customs officials prioritize their limited attention to cargoes that are considered high risk.

The target is considered but not benchmark, determined or even fixed if they failed.

The law was designed with hopes of addressing the twin issues of low revenue collections, proliferation and graft and corruption in the BOC and the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Biazon also calls for the law's amendment or repeal have been raised many times since more tariffs are now based on cost instead, on the often manipulation of collections amount to gain bonuses.

Purisima said that to properly implement the law and to be able to roll out revised, post-earning should be done "in an inclusive manner where even members of those that would be affected and the goals should be based on more hard facts."

He said the current post-selling system provides figures that were hard to break down by region and by district.

ATI posts 29% drop in 2011 profit

By Paolo G. Montecillo

PORT operator Asian Terminals Inc. (ATI) reported a significant decline in earnings for 2011 due to tepid market demand and the payment of a lost award.

In a statement on Friday, ATI said it capped 2011 with a 9-percent dip in revenue to P4.29 billion. Income settled at P1.52 billion, down by 29 percent from P2.14 billion the year before.

It only profits from continuing operations (or taken into account, the decline would be 14 percent year-on-year).

Despite the lackluster performance, ATI remains optimistic because of a seen dividend of 25 centavos per share—the highest in the company's history—for a total of P500 million.

"The fundamental robustness of ATI's integrated port business enabled it to provide strong cushioning even under challenging times," the company said.

The company said it was able to match its 2011 results, new container ventures are using to, "despite global and local economic challenges because of higher productivity and efficiency and prudent cost management."

"To perpetuate its future growth, ATI is constantly expanding its port facilities and further improving the efficiency of its operations through the acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment and technologies," the company said.

In the third quarter of 2010, ATI told its Filipino rivals fluctuated in Batangas, giving the company a one-time gain of P1.6 billion. The win sold to a group chaired by former Supreme Court Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

The Manzalez facility was supposed to be sold to San Miguel Corp. but the talks between the two groups fell through due to disagreements over the price and terms of the sale.

Federal Land, Orix embarking on $300-M project

PROPERTY developer Federal Land and Orix Corp. of Japan formed a joint venture, called Bonifacio Landmark Corp., to operate a $300-million mixed-used facility at The Fort.

The complex will rise on a 1.3-hectare lot at the northeastern part of Bonifacio Global City. It will have a luxury hotel and prime office and residential complex.

Federal Land and Orix will jointly finance and develop the project.

The resort complex will be managed by Grand Hyatt Hotels Worldwide.

The construction of the hotel, Grand Hyatt, is now in full swing and is slated for completion in 2014.

The project will offer 40,000 square meter of premium office space, first-class residential apartments sharing a common podium to expand by high-end retail establishments and a 40-story luxurious condo hotel featuring 430 guest rooms.

BLC chair Alfred Ty said the partnership with Orix runs in view of confidence not only for Federal Land of the Metrobank Group but also for the Philippines.

"We are delighted to join hands with Orix once again to develop what could truly become another landmark development in the Philippines," Ty said.

SM Land pursuing P4.2-B office building projects

SM LAND, scaled to Commercial Properties Group, is to commit P4.29 billion for two major office building projects in 2012—The mall-operator, the third in terms of land area, is to develop a 40-hectare business park on the Mall of Asia Complex in Pasay City, and SM Cyber West Avenue, a standalone office building on a property across SM North Edsa Mall in Quezon City.

The two endeavors are estimated to cost P1.2 billion, while SM Cyber West will require investments of P3.08 billion.

"We remain confident in the overall growth of the business process outsourcing industry in the Philippines," said David Nihal, SM Land senior vice president and head of the commercial properties group.

SM Land has capitalized a substantial share of BPO businesses with its Hardware Group and Twin Towers developments in MOAC. It also developed built-to-suit BPO offices such as the two SM Cyber West buildings along Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., and the SM Cyber Bagtas.

"Our value proposition strongly remains to be value-driven, energy-efficient workplaces—the functionality and prestige of a central business district address, at costs not usually associated with such," said Nihal.

SM Land has developed a niche in the local office leasing market by offering expansive build-to-suit prime locations.

Large, column-free floor plates or "megafloors" are vital to BPOs and call center operations to maximize space and accommodate flexible workstation placements, explains Nihal. "That ties in to process efficiency, minimizing the use of elevators," he adds. In its standalone office buildings, BPO tenants would usually occupy multiple regular-sized floors.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
COLLNOS Building, 2007 Roosevelt Ave.
Quezon City

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Citizenship	Position
CONVERGYS PHILIPPINES, INC. Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave. Makati City	Bhaskar Lama Canadian	Oracle Cluster Operations
TRAVELHAPPE TOURS & CONSULTANCY INC. Unit C&D, G/F Aurora Annex Holy Spirit Dr. cor. Maramba St., Brgy. Holy Spirit, Quezon City	Jiyeon Lee Korean	Marketing Manager - Philippines
GENPACT SERVICES LLC UP Ayala Land Bldg., Northgate Cyberpark, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Arun Alexander Indian	Management Trainee - Operations
FLOUR DANIEL (INC.) PHILIPPINES 30th Flr. BPI, Ayala Ave. Filinvest Corporate City, Muntinlupa City	Sameer Chandra Russell Pathak Australian	Lead Technical Specialist
FLUOR DANIEL INC. - PHILIPPINES 30th Flr. BPI, Ayala Ave. Filinvest Corporate City, Muntinlupa City	T. Jay Sharma Canadian	Material Management Lead Coach
NEWSLIGHT LENDING & TRADING CORP. #454 E. Rodriguez Sr. Blvd. Caloocan City	Sanjay Subbiahdas Parmar Indian	Marketing Consultant
ZENSAR PHARMA, INC. 30 West Capitol Drive, Brgy. Kapitolyo, Pasig City	Indrakumar Buchand Khatri Indian	Marketing Manager
UNIVERSAL BUSINESS TRAVEL CONSULTANCY (INLIMITED INC. G-A-07 Cypress Bldg., Mdc. Bank Drive cor. De Leon St. Brgy. Ugong, Pasig City	Qian Xu Chinese	International Marketing Director - Philippines
INFOSYS BPO LIMITED - PHILIPPINE BRANCH UP Town Hall Market Market! Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City	Sarah Louise Edwards British	Consultant
PILIPINAS SHELL PETROLEUM CORPORATION RFVM Complex, Tabonoc Village, Talisay City	Chia Wing Lan Malaysian	Pricing Analyst
SITEL PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 11/F Tektite Tower, Philippine Stock Exchange Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Mark Edward Santos American	Director of Account Management
GENESIS PHILIPPINES INC. 4/F Union Bank Plaza, Meralco Ave. cor. Onyx Rd., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Shashikar Suresh Indian	Manager, Global Functional Resourcing
YOUNG LIVING PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 10/A Benavidez St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Lakhmender Singh Indian	Sales Representative
BAXTER AMERICAS (HOLDINGS) PHILIPPINES LIMITED 12/F Citibank Tower, 8741 Paseo De Roxas, Makati City	James Michael Lafferty American	General Manager - Philippines
DAIKIN CAPITAL LTD. - MAIN OFFICE 11/F PhilCom Tower, 8738 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Yi Chi Ma Vietnamese	Vietnamese language Customer Service Officer
DAIKIN CAPITAL LTD. - MAIN OFFICE 11/F PhilCom Tower, 8738 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Yingtao Bao Chinese	Chinese language Customer Service Officer
DAIKIN CAPITAL LTD. - MAIN OFFICE 11/F PhilCom Tower, 8738 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Renato Ucol Indonesian	Chinese Indonesia language Customer Service Officer
DAIKIN CAPITAL LTD. - MAIN OFFICE 11/F PhilCom Tower, Ayala Ave., Makati City	Phan Bao Ngoc Vietnamese	Vietnamese language Customer Service Officer
AEGIS SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. Rembrandt Bldg., Dr. Mendoza Ave., Ortigas Ctr., Pasig City	Yukari Ekchi Japanese	Executive Operations Japanese Language
MITSUBISHI PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 14/F Security Bank Centre, 6776 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Mark Kuntzsch German	General Vice President (GVP) Vice Chairman Cebu Technical Institute
THE PHILIPPINE AMERICAN LIFE & GENERAL INSURANCE CO. Philam Life Bldg., United Nations Ave., Ermita, Manila	Andreas Rosenthal German	Senior Vice President - Chief Financial Officer
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 6/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Yin Hong Yau Malaysian	Senior Mandarin/ Chinese Language Customer Service Support Staff
SPORTS BOOKIE ONLINE, INC. 6/F Burgundy Corporate Tower, 252 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City	Lee Kiaw Tan Malaysian	Senior Mandarin/ Chinese Language Customer Service Support Staff
FIVE LAKES MANAGEMENT PHILIPPINES CORPORATION Unit# One Bldg., 3/F Room 304 San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Mooniappan Thangavel Indian	Senior Packaged Supplies Consultant
SSL SERVICES PHILIPPINES, INC. 5/F One E-Com Center, Harbor Drive, Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City	Jayant Verma Indian	Assistant Vice President for Operations

If you have any information/objection to the above mentioned applications please communicate with this Regional Director.

ATTY. ALVIN C. MACEDA JR.
Regional Director

PhilPlans

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We salute our **Maharlika Awardees!**

These select few have demonstrated exceptional talent, foremost expertise, and unrelenting passion in pursuing PhilPlans' mission of cultivating financial nobility for the Filipino. **Congratulations Maharlika Awardees, your recognition is well-deserved!**

Shaneen S. Pajelo
VP, Mgt Dv, Associate
(MGD)

Charlene H. Desoluteo
VP, Mgt Dv, Associate
(MGD)

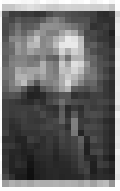
Ms. Maj Michelle S. Dulalaya
Chartered Accountant
(Admin)

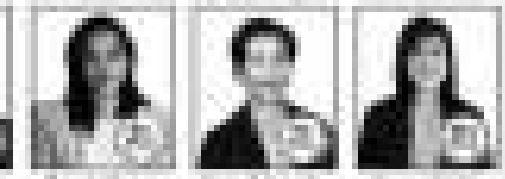
MESSAGES

FROM THE BSB BOARD COMMISSIONER

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

FROM THE PRESIDENT & CEO





Highlights

Asia share prices up on looming Greek bailout

TOKYO—Tokyo stocks jumped to a seven-month high on Friday as Asian shares rose on signs that Greece is a step nearer to securing a bailout fund.

Results of Greece's bond swap with private creditors showed that 69.8 percent of private creditors had accepted its bond swap offer. The aim would reach 95.7 percent with the use of collective action clauses to enforce the deal.

"The headlines from Greece are within expectations, and the market reaction is a clipped one for buy the rumor, sell the fact," said Yuji Saito, director of the foreign exchange division at Credit Agricole Bank in Tokyo.

Japan's Nikkei average jumped more than 2 percent at one point, topping the 10,000-mark for the first time in seven months, before ending up 1.7 percent.

The euro fell to around $1.3200 from around $1.3260 prior to announcement.

The dollar fell to ¥ 93 Gmarch high against the yen above ¥1.071 yen. Commodity currencies such as the Australian dollar held steady around $1.0640, after briefly falling on a surprise drop in Australia's trade deficit in January.

Spot gold inched up 0.2 percent to $1,702 an ounce on hopes for its safe-haven buying by China.

As Greece appeared on track to proceed with the debt swap deal, the focus now shifts to how Greece treats the minor holders of foreign law-issued debts, where there's a lot more uncertainty, said Adrian Foster, head of financial markets research for Asia Pacific at Fuhrhand International in Hong Kong.

"Greece clearly wants them to participate or, the exact sort of logic as the Greek law debt deal I do wonder whether the Greeks may have underestimated how much they need to that in fact Greece can declare default. That might be the outcome," he said.

Also, a Tokyo-based analyst at a European securities firm said that, with the reflation trade likely to be relaxed, "the real question is whether Greece can keep paying for its debts in order to sustain the 10-year three-global bonders."

A decidedly 'default' by Greece would have triggered much more far-reaching financial damage than the losses to bond holders would suffer.

Japan spearheads stock rally as Nikkei hits 7-month high

percent.

Tokyo opened ended a rally in the MSCI Asia Pacific ex-Japan index, which is gained as much as 1.3 percent.

The just Asian index rose on for a weekly loss of about 1.5 percent, however, as global growth concerns dragged prices lower earlier in the week before optimism over Greece took over. So far this year, it has gained more than 4 percent.

"There seems to be a general presumption now that [Greece's debt swap meeting] is a done deal and that tonight's announcement will merely be a formal ratification," said Stephen Innes, market strategist, OMI Markets.

A WOMAN wearing face mobile phone walks past a share price board in Tokyo, Japan's share prices rose 168.75 points to close at 9,929.54 at the Tokyo Stock Exchange, the highest level in seven-plus months. AP

Brent crude added 0.1 percent to $127.62 a barrel, while US crude rose 0.3 percent to $106.08 a barrel.

Sentiment in Asian credit markets also improved, narrowing the spread on the iTraxx Asia ex-Japan investment-grade index by about 5 basis points. Reuters

China inflation seen to slow down

BEIJING—China's inflation slowed sharply in February and factory output eased, data showed Friday, adding to evidence of a slowdown in the economy and giving Beijing more room to relax credit limits.

The figures from the National Bureau of Statistics come as the economy faces headwinds over Europe's debt crisis and sluggish growth in the United States, which are hurting export-driven China.

The consumer price index rose 2.2 percent in February—the lowest since June 2009—compared with 4.5 percent in January, when spending before the Chinese New Year holiday drove up retail prices, the government said.

Before January, inflation had eased for five straight months after hitting a more than three-year high of 5.9 percent in July and analysts expected the downward trend to resume in February as the economy continued to slow.

Premier Wen Jiabao, speaking at the opening of the annual session of parliament in Monday, warned consumer prices remained high and the government's aim was to keep the inflation rate within 4 percent this year.

The statistics office's index, which measures the cost of goods at the farm and factory gate and is a leading indicator of consumer prices, declined in February compared with a 0.1 percent increase in January.

Inflation has triggered social unrest in the past and economists fear a spike in food prices would deny an expected further rate move in the coming months.

But they stand out against the [illegible] year, leading economists to be an increase of 19.6 percent.

Retail sales rose 16.7 percent in the two-month period.

Beijing economists the January and February figures for output, investment and retail sales due to distortions caused by the Lunar New Year holiday, which typically sees the first two months of the year.

China has set its economic growth target at 7.5 percent this year, from eight percent last year, in an official rebound adjustment that the export-driven economy is moving as the euro zone crisis and slow pick up in the United States limits demand for its products.

The Asian powerhouse expanded 9.2 percent last year, defying fears 10.6 percent in 2009, as global meltdown and efforts to tame high inflation put the brakes on growth.

The downward trajectory in consumer prices means inflation "can be safely relegated from the top spot of government concerns", as Beijing turns its focus to boosting growth, said Alistair Thornton of IHS Global Insight. AFP

A PEOPLE squeeze in line to negotiate at a market in Beijing. China's inflation fell sharply in February, giving the authorities more leeway to stimulate the country's slowing economy. AP

In US, household wealth on the rise

WASHINGTON—Americans are climbing farther out of the hole they sank into during the Great Recession.

A stock rally in the end of 2012 helped rebuild some of their lost wealth—a trend that carried into 2012. Households responded by borrowing more. For the Civil Investment Bureau, the Federal Reserve reported in their home values fell further.

Americans' wealth rose 2.1 percent to $58.3 trillion in the October-December quarter, the shortest gain in a row, the Federal Reserve said Thursday. Still, it would have to rise an additional 13 percent to return to its pre-recession peak.

Saving the gains were stock portfolios, which surged nearly 10 percent in the fourth quarter. And stocks have since risen further. The Standard & Poor's 500 index has jumped 24 percent.

Nancy Bolsen is a managing Editor.

Bolsen, a flight attendant and frequent contributor from St. Louis, still hasn't recouped all the investment losses she suffered during the recession. But she now feels comfortable enough about her finances to cut out and stop by Starbucks more frequently. She recently made a down payment on a retirement home in Florida.

"Things are looking brighter and sunnier" said Bolsen, 64, who began saving in earnest four years—if the economy keeps improving. "I don't have too much in my pocket. But I know it's coming. Things are only going to get better."

Household wealth, or net worth, reflects the value of assets like homes, bank accounts and stocks, minus debts like mortgages and credit cards. It bottomed during the recession at $49 trillion in the first quarter of 2009. It's still well below the pre-recession peak of $64 trillion.

The Fed's quarterly report on the assets most of the financial transactions that occur in the United States.

Investors are usually wrong to boost the economy. When people feel wealthier, they typically spend more. Businesses respond by stepping up plans to hire and expand.

Corporations are also wealthier. They hold a record $2.2 trillion in cash at the end of the year, up from $ 2.1 a fifth of the end of September.

Still, few Americans are saving enough to retire on their current investments—their homes. Home values dropped 1.3 percent in the October-December quarter to roughly $16 trillion. The value of US housing remains nearly 40 percent lower than its peak, reached in 2006, when its was when the recession began in December 2007.

The housing market has shown incremental signs of improvement in recent months. It could benefit further if the job market keeps improving.

The improving economy can both has emboldened some people to borrow more. In the final three months of last year, household debt rose at an annual rate of 0.25 percent. It was the first increase since mid-2008. AP

US tax break goes far beyond factory floor

WASHINGTON—US President Barack Obama summed up the image of a scrappy sole worker or high-tech engineer when he calls for expanding a major tax perks tax break for manufacturing, but he might just as well evoke the coffee-shop barista or the cubicle geek.

Broadening the $10 billion-a-year deduction for domestic manufacturing is a cornerstone of Obama's plan to revamp corporate taxes. Under the plan, all companies pay would be subject to much lower tax rates, with even bigger breaks for manufacturers.

A Reuters analysis of companies filings and government data shows how broadly the deduction is now used, suggesting it may be overly ingestible as it's used. It focused on manufacturing.

Corporate America's army of tax lawyers will be at the ready. From Starbucks Corp to Time Warner Cable Inc, businesses that brand traditional manufacturers have the benefit. Business Week.

"If you are in the Dow Jones industrial [average], and you are not taking this deduction, there is something wrong," said John Buckingham, a former US tax official now at the firm HR Dennis. "It has always applied to a motley crew of industries."

The deduction has become so deeply embedded in the country that even the corporate-activity qualifies for it, the Congressional Research Service said in a report last month.

Obama wants to cut the top corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 28 percent, with a special 25 percent rate for manufacturing. At the same time, he wants to double the deduction for "advanced" manufacturing, which he has not defined, and cut the break for oil and gas companies.

But critics say the manufacturing focus is no longer part policy as Obama faces a potentially tough reelection fight on his design and enters such as Ohio and Pennsylvania, where manufacturing is important.

Meanwhile, Congress is unlikely to take any action on the tax breaks until after, perhaps long after, the Nov. 4 vote. Reuters

IMF: Risk of EU crisis 'removed' for now

NEW YORK—The risk of crisis in the euro zone has been "removed" for now, IMF head Dominique Legarde said Thursday, as Greece rescue efforts showed signs of progress.

"As we speak, it looks like it's going through," said Legarde, head of the International Monetary Fund, at an interview with Bloomberg Television Charlie Rose on the US public broadcaster PBS.

In Athens, it appeared certain on former had clinched a huge stakes debt swap in a deadline but bondholders to accept huge losses on their holdings passed opening this early for an urgent bailout.

"It looks as if the sunshine will be prevailing," Legarde said late Thursday, adding that the "real risk of a crisis, of an acute crisis in Greece, for the moment, removed."

Legarde said she was "not pessimistic" about the plan's chance for success, adding "figuring is in that size."

With a threshold apparently met, Greece can proceed to pass on towards unlocking a 120 billion euro bailout from the European Union and IMF, a process that might include resorting to so-called collective action clauses. Athens introduced to force holdouts to accept the deal.

Legarde cautioned the world is crossing cells for a threshold hard to keep the euro zone protected from future crises.

"They need high volumes," said the league the latter, because they have to refinance," she said. "I think it's in the interest of the Europeans to have that firewall in order to stop the contagion and for able to observe a lot of money at the markets if investors decided to suddenly not necessarily be interested in Italian debt, for instance." AFP

US jobs gains seen to be strong, keeping Fed at bay

WASHINGTON—US employment likely grew solidly for a third straight month in March, a sign that the economic recovery is becoming more durable and in less need of further monetary stimulus from the Federal Reserve.

The economy probably created 210,000 jobs last month, according to a Reuters survey, following January's rally of 240,000. The unemployment rate is expected to have held at a three-year low of 9.7 percent.

If the forecasts are accurate, the government's jobs report on Friday would mark the first time since early 2008 that payrolls have grown by more than 200,000 for three months in a row—an outcome that could bolster President Barack Obama's chances of winning reelection.

The improving labor market is another sign that the recovery is broadening and reducing the urgency for the Fed to act now," said Ryan Sweet, a senior economist at Moody's Analytics in West Chester Pennsylvania.

Although the job market is gaining some muscle, the pace of improvement remains too slow to do much to absorb the 15.3 million Americans who are either out of work or underemployed.

Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke last week described the labor market as "far from normal" and said continued improvement would require stronger demand for its goods and services.

Still, he suggested the central bank would have to act soon in order for the US central bank to launch another round of bond buying to drive interest rates lower.

Officials said in January they expected growth this year to be higher than 2.5 percent.

The jobs report, which ers the basis for financial markets' monthly, would add to the list of data highlighting the US economy's underlying strength.

It would also provide a hopeful sign for the global recovery at a time that growth is slowing in China and the euro zone appears to be sliding into recession. The US economy grew at its fastest pace in more than six years in the fourth quarter, the highest since the euro started circulating in 1999.

In contrast, the US unemployment rate has dropped 0.8 percentage point since August, providing some relief to Obama, who faces an election hurdle in which the economy has been taking center stage.

Economists project the jobless rate would fall below 9 percent by November, even if the recent hiring in the jobs market have Americans who have given up the search for work back into the labor force.

The possibility that discouraged workers resumed the hunt for a job raises the risk that unemployment rose in February.

The latter have participation rate—the percentage of working-age Americans either with a job or looking for one—is near a 26-year low. Reuters

People, Events & Products

E-mail: supplements@inquirer.com.ph
Supplements Head Jong Rosario

Globe cites increasing importance of IT execs in PH firms to drive innovation

GLOBE Telecom reinforced its support for IT professionals in the Philippines as the company, through unit Globe Business, renewed its support for the Association of SEAIT IT Executives and Professionals (ASITEP), the umbrella group of IT experts in the Philippines working under the Semiconductor and Electronic Industries in the Philippines (SEIPI).

Business executives and CIOs around the world and across industries agree that information technology is a valued investment to achieving an effective business strategy and vision. The 2011 United CIO study by IBM also showed that CIOs from different-sized companies across the globe have become more aligned to CEOs, and are using IT innovations to drive competitive advantage.

Greg Bautista, head of Solutions Delivery of Globe Telecom's Information Systems Group (ISG) said that today's CIOs are faced with an increasingly challenging environment defined by sweeping changes and the need for gathering vision customer or market intelligence, insight and visibility. Bautista also shared his insights on how the pioneering telecommunications company assists growth by uncovering, delivering and delivering value to its customers. He added that Globe accomplishes these through various product and service advancements, such as the company's recent 100 Gbps network upgrade to IGNEM (Intelligently-Optical Add-Drop Multiplexer), which supports the increasing bandwidth demand of customers' businesses. This makes Globe the first carrier in the Philippines to deploy ROADM as well as 40G optical links over its Broadband Access Service Network (BAS). Globe has also recently upgraded its data center facilities, making it the first local telco to set up a modern Internet data center infrastructure for high-performance cloud services.

"These advancements are made because of our company's goal of enhancing customer experience and meeting the ever-growing needs of businesses. We are proud to say that being the first Philippine telco to implement these network technologies makes us globally competitive with world-class carriers. We ensure that through these customer innovations, Globe is well prepared to deliver the capacity and service quality our customers require," said Romero.

Globe Business has been a long-standing partner of SEIPI and ASITEP. Together with these organizations, Globe Business aims to strengthen the semiconductor and electronics sector in the Philippines by providing information and communication technology (ICT) solutions relevant to the needs of the industry.

GLOBE Business backs the formalization of SEIPI IT Executives and Professionals (ASITEP) career partnership with the group for its programs and initiatives for the year. The agreement is the partnership arms-length that the group's year-end membership meeting. Greg Bautista (4th from left), head of Solutions Delivery of Globe Business, is joined in the photo by (from left) ASITEP Board of Directors Art Opus of Analog Devices, Richard Garcia of Fujitsu Semiconductor, Rizal Chairman of Texas Instruments, Jojo Vargas of Xinkor, Jim Buenaventura of TDK, Alex Jimenez of Emerson Network, Jerry Lerma of Prizm, Albert Velasco of Globe Business and Ismael Cardi of Seiping.

SN ABBITEC POWER GROUP TRIUMPHS IN THE 17TH ANVIL AWARDS

SN ABBITEC Power (SNAP) Group has bagged 4 Anvil Awards during the recently concluded 47th World Mandala Media Strategic Co. Manufacturing (TS) SNAP Group, and its principal SN Power of Business, won an excellence award for a Team SNAP, their transportation safety campaign for their employees. SNAP-Harapan also won an Excellence award for its Activation by-Promotion Power Plant inaugural coffee table book "Renewable Energy for a Powered Nation" under the PR Tool Special Publication category. SNAP-Magsaysay's silent donor for its efficient water use campaign Oki 39 Magsaysay Power Plant also won an Excellence award for its Activation category while SNAP-Harapan also received a Merit award for its Activation category for its campaign Tile Power to Pinnae. The winning team was led by SNAP chief corporate services officer Mahayuli Ibarlos (center, left) and SN Power country representatives and business development manager Dr. Southeast Asia Daniella Alonso (4th from right). SNAP-Harapan and SNAP-Magsaysay joint ventures of SN Power of Norway and AboitizPower.

4 Avon representatives become millionaires

LEGACY are Gemma Bisnar (president and general manager, Avon Philippines) and Erna Herrera (executive director for Sales, Avon Philippines).

FOUR Avon franchise dealers became instant millionaires during the recently concluded Be an Avon Millionaire trifecta drive, which culminated with an awarding ceremony at the company's Shaw branch. This raffle drive is one of the direct selling leader's latest initiatives to reward its representatives for their loyalty. Four raffle drives have been given away since its launch last year.

Franchise dealers Jonathan Camilla (Marikit, Mindanao), Rosendo Dumon (Lapu-Lapu, Visayas), Ronel Tangue (Marikit, Luzon), and Julia Livera (Davao Mindanao, Mindanao) each received one million pesos, raffle draw from Philippines.

The event also marked the first branch event of Avon Philippines' incoming president and general manager Earnest Bisnar, who began his career with Avon in 1994 as a senior consultant at the Marketing Department. Bisnar drew the names of the winners and delivered an inspiring speech to the dealers present to the emcee and the thousands tuned in to the drawn via live web streaming.

"Everyone is here today because someone gave them that opportunity," he said. "Be Be an Avon Millionaire Carpal Raffle shows Avon offers women the chance to succeed and allows them to help others gain the same success."

He concluded: "Avon offers unparalleled earning opportunities to our representatives, and I believe this is one of the reasons why we are the beauty direct selling company in the country. But, ultimately it's more than just selling great products and enjoying the income that comes with it—it's about owning dreams realized and encouraging each individual to be the best that he or she can be."

PH's top furniture sourcing shows merge to form one unmissable event

THIS coming March 14 to 17, the one most important furniture and furnishings sourcing event in the Philippines merge into one impressive showcase alongside the March 2012 Manila FAME exhibition. Co-InStore and Manila Now will feature at the design and lifestyle exhibition in set to draw large numbers of local and foreign buyers to the SMX Convention Center in Manila.

Organized by the Center for International Exhibitions and Trade Missions (CITEM), Manila FAME is one of the largest-running trade shows in the Pacific region. Meanwhile, the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP) and the Cebu Furniture Industries Foundation Inc. (CFIF) decided to forge closer ties with CITEM by bringing their shows into the Manila FAME expo.

"This dynamic collaboration will definitely make for a bigger and better showcase. We no longer experience as individual shows but as a unified event. This coming together is our vision for the whole industry and we are doubling, even tripling our efforts to put on a great event to better serve the needs of our buyers and exhibitors," said the exhibition chair for the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP), Eduardo Zobel.

The October 2011 edition of the show proved so successful that buyers from 65 countries came to visit. It was the highest turnout of foreign buyers at the exhibition since 2008.

"And we are definitely expecting the March show to have an even greater response. It's the buying seasons and trade visitors will be flying into the region to visit various exhibitions on the ASEAN Spring circuit. We have high hopes that Manila will draw in a substantial number of these overseas visitors," said Christina Gaston, exhibition chairwoman of the Cebu Furniture Industries Foundation Inc. (CFIF).

The furniture hall will be packed not only with the finest in furniture and furnishings but with activities as well. One of the new additions will be The Hub, which will serve as a platform for networking and exchange in the show. The Hub would feature speakers coming from different disciplines to present their latest works and advancements including famed branding consultant, Michael Cleghorn.

"One of the things we did in Cebufurniture which was very successful was to organize a tour of showrooms and factories," added Gaston. "We are using that same concept for the March show but we're doing it in on a bigger scale. This year, our buyers can take their pick from close to 100 showrooms and factories to visit, as we extend the program to include in Pampanga, Manila, as well as Cebu, and we will handle travel arrangements for them. This way they can get to see first-hand how our designers and manufacturers produce some of the most creative pieces available in the market."

Manila FAME 2012 featuring Cebufurniture and New Asia's Design and Lifestyle Venue is the preferred destination for lifestyle products in furniture and furnishings, holiday and gifts, and fashion accessories. It will occupy close to 30,000 square meters of space at the SMX Convention Center. Buyers may pre-register via www.newasiaconnect.com. Pre-registration is open until March 9.

Bits & Clips

Kawara joins Worldbex

KAWARA, a comprehensive roofing company widely specified by many top architects, developers and contractors, is joining Worldbex 2012. They will showcase their specialty products, primarily roofing materials imported from Brownell's leading manufacturers. Leading through innovative functional designs, Brownell is one of the top companies in the Philippines roofing industry today. Known to be ethical and exclusive distributor of prestressed foreign roofing brands such as Marcoup of Japan, Monarch of Germany, Decrad of France, Petitroof of Korea, GAF of the US, Pro Long of China and Polycom Insulation of Taiwan. Kawara has the extensive range of roofing products with a variety of types, profiles, and colors to suit any budget and to meet any roofing need. The company will showcase their latest roofing product at the upcoming Worldbex exhibit, the Solar Roof Tile, an ecological roofing solution that integrates seamlessly into the roofing structure while maintaining the aesthetic qualities of modern roof design. To obtain additional quality roofing materials, visit them at Booths 427 (15) 457-B at the Main Hall of the World Trade Center on March 14 to 18 for call them at (632) 519-8888, 478-8812, 415-2888, 415-1427 for other information. You can also visit them at www.kawara.com.ph.

Whirlpool holds laundry seminar

AS PART of its corporate citizenship program and to assist interested entrepreneurs to start an efficient and profitable laundry business, Whirlpool will be holding a laundry seminar on April 20 and 21 (Friday and Saturday) from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Seminar Hall, 5th Floor, Whirlpool Corporation, 7th Avenue Corner 34th Street, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City. The seminar organized by Whirlpool, the world's leading manufacturer of washing machines, as well as other home appliances, is intended to support, educate and encourage people who are looking for new businesses to get into a lucrative industry. Participants in the seminar will learn the important aspects on how to put up a laundry business and will be taught the rudiments of doing laundry. Interested parties (both) will be charged a fee of P1,000 inclusive of lunch, snacks and seminar handouts. Limited to 40 pax. Throughout the seminar, Participants who register on or before March 31 will be given a discounted rate of P1,000. Seminar speakers and demonstrators have wide-ranging experiences in starting a laundry business and proven expertise in this line of work. For inquiries call Cecille Cabrio or Romelyn Miguel at 712-0500.

CHEVRON SUPPORTS MISS EARTH SCHOOL TOUR

CHEVRON, the world's largest geothermal producer, shared success stories of its operations, and social commitment with Miss Earth Foundation (MEF). The activities of Chevron will be used by Miss Earth Pageant winners in national tours to promote sustainable development, and is aligned with Chevron's renewable energy advocacy in the Philippines, which I and 378 light bulbs in 10 by the energy independence, and environmental protection. Photo shows, from left, MEF executive director Cathy Untalan, 2011 Miss Earth-Water Alyssa Valdez, Chevron Geothermal Philippines Holdings, Inc. president and general manager Jose Ma. and Policy Investment and Public Affairs manager Quentin Pacheco during the symbolic ceremony.

BUSINESS

2-mo vehicle sales down 15.7%

Industry hopes to recover from slump soon

By Arlyn R. Rarisa

VEHICLE sales fell by 15.7 percent or 18,977 units in the first two months of the year from 120,519 units in the same period last year as the flooding in Thailand continued to put a strain on local supply.

Based on the joint report of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) and Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA), sales in February grew by 28.7 percent to 10,681 units from 8,299 units in January, indicating a possible recovery from a slump last year brought about by the Japan crisis and the flooding in Thailand.

According to the report, sales of passenger cars in January and February this year registered a 32.5-percent decline to 9,299 units from 13,993 units in the same period last year.

On the third, fourth and fifth spots were Isuzu Philippines Corp., Columbian Autocar Corp. and Ford Motor Co. Phils. Inc.

In a separate assessment issued yesterday, Ford said it posted a 48-percent drop to 435 units in February this year from the 838 units sold in the same month last year. The company said line was still due to the request on supply and delivery of the flooding in Thailand.

Ford said the flooding had dragged down the sales of the company's best-selling models—the Ford Fiesta, Ford Ecosport and Ford Everest, as these are all built in Thailand, where many industries, including the automotive sector, were still reeling on getting back to their pre-flood production schedules.

Ford's February performances has brought the company's total retailer sales in the first two months of the year to 982 units, down by 40 percent from the 1,506 units sold in the same period last year.

Ford Group Philippines president Randy Rempo expressed confidence that the operations of Ford Group, in the country would be back to pre-calamity levels by end-April for the introduction of new models in the Manila International Auto Show.

In particular, Ford will launch the All-New Ranger at the upcoming Manila International Auto Show, along with the All-New Fiesta and 2.0L STD, the first vehicle Ford will introduce to the market featuring its innovative Ecoboost engine technology.

Dutch firm taking over control of Alaska Milk

By Doris C. Dumlao

DUTCH dairy giant Royal Friesland Campina will take over a controlling stake in local milk manufacturer Alaska Milk Corp. from the Ayuyao family as part of RFC's expansion in Asia.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange on Friday, RFC said it would take an equity interest in Alaska Milk to 66% percent from a 9.1 percent by buying the shares held and controlled by the Ayuyao family. It will also make a tender offer for the publicly listed shares.

Wilfred Steven Uytengsu will, however, continue to lead the food company as its president and chief executive officer and remain a director of the company, the disclosure added.

The deal was estimated to cost about P24 per share. the same share price in which RFC will make a tender offer for the remaining Alaska Milk shares. The valued all of Alaska Milk's outstanding shares at P11.1 billion, suggesting that the Uytengsus will get around P3.2.66 billion for the 9.1 percent stake to be sold to the Dutch firm.

As of yesterday, Alaska Milk had a market capitalization of P14.1 billion. Its shares were up by 85 centavos to P28 per share ahead of the announcement of the deal.

"The transaction strengthens Friesland Campina's position in Asia, which is a strategic growth area for the dairy multinational," the disclosure said, noting that the deal would add to its market base the Philippines' about 100 million consumers.

RFC is present in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Vietnam, India, Hong Kong and Singapore. It expects to raise its annual global revenues to about 2.7 billion euros from 2.5 billion euros with the acquisition.

With yearly revenue of more than P12 billion, Alaska Milk is one of the two major players in the Philippine dairy market. The 40-year-old company employs more than a thousand people and operates a manufacturing facility in San Pedro, Laguna.

PROPERTY

Cito Cesar D. Mangawang

Condo-buying experience depends on agents, developers

RESEARCH and investigate to find an affordable and reliable-line condominium unit near your workplace.

YOU still need to do your homework when buying a condo unit near your workplace.

Text and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

(Concluded)

THE FIRST two weeks, Inquirer Property has enumerated the eight most common complaints of buyers of Philippine condominiums. Now, we ask the property experts and analyses: Do these rants have basis? The unanimous response seems to be in the affirmative.

"Yes, a significant component (of the condominium business) comes from the most neglected part of the development phase—the post sales and service delivery process. Developers look at this phase as incidental and an added cost. So they end up using poorly trained frontliners and account managers employing archaic methods that breed bureaucracy. The can be a recipe for a higher attrition rate," analyzed Rodjun M. Soriano, thesis program director for real estate and senior advisor for Strong Boutique Business Advisory.

Soriano added that buyers must read and understand the Reservation Agreements (RA). They must also make sure that they take the initiative in minimizing their deposits and downpayments. Agents, he noted, come and go, and it would be hard to rely on agents and developers' representations to provide the servicing when there are thousands of units being promoted.

"Real estate buying should never be an emotional decision, and it pays to do extensive research not only on projects but on the

CONDO-BUYING B2-3

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PUEBLO DE ORO PAMPANGA COMMUNITIES

Blending modern conveniences with nature and foliage

By Theresa S. Sumatanga

THE PAMPANGUEÑO'S love for good food has earned them the distinction of being the "culinary center of the Philippines."

However, its not all that there is to this province, as Pampanga is also known as a perfect destination during Holy Week for the annual "senakulo" and during Christmas for the Lanzon Festival.

Just a two hour drive from Manila, the province of Pampanga boast a number of world-class resorts, casinos and duty-free shops. The province is also famous for a number of activities such as the Fire Air Balloon festival that makes it a perfect alternative for that quick getaway.

Thus, it was not at all surprising that when property developer Pueblo de Oro Development Corp. set its sights on Lipono last year for expansion they named with San Fernando, Pampanga.

Complete essentials

"Every family deserves to live in a community that offers a life of serenity and sense of belonging, a place that provides the complete essentials of modern life, all within arm's reach at affordable prices," the company said.

And it is what Pueblo de Oro Pampanga Communities is all about as it blends today's modern conveniences with nature and foliage to provide a comforting living environment to every Pampanguena family.

"The project's land development is now in full swing and ready for turnover to its first batch of homeowners by the end of this month," the company claimed.

Exclusive collection

Currently, the 30-hectare master-planned development offers an exclusive collection of three private and gated villages that homebuyers can chose from.

For the start-up family, the Spanish Mediterranean-themed townhouses in 46sq.m. footmatch, would be ideal. While the Park Place homes is twin houses which evokes a contemporary Asian-themed and perfect for the middle income. Then lastly there is the first-inspired two-storey homes of The Horizon Residences that caters to the middle income modern family.

Each subdivision, according to Pueblo de Oro, offers a landscaped park, a playground and clubhouse to provide your family an ideal venue for special occasions and gatherings.

Meanwhile, future residents are assured of a worry free living experience as security is not an issue as Pueblo de Oro Pampanga Communities.

"Each of the villages are protected by a perimeter fence, there will be a guardhouse and entrance gate, plus 24/7 security," the company said.

Moreover, the pool and basketball court will be for the exclusive use of The Horizon Residences homeowners.

True to its commitment

With a number of other projects in the pipeline, Pueblo de Oro stands true to its commitment to address the needs of a growing and dynamic consumer market by making available a comprehensive product mix that includes quality residential facilities, ranging from exclusive residential villages for the high-end market, to value-packed middle-income housing packages and highly-affordable housing units where work, business, recreation and lifestyle essentials are all within reach.

"From Cagayan de Oro to Cebu and Pampanga and soon Batangas, we have come very far (times) to spread the gold standard in community living," the company concluded.

Pueblo de Oro Development is owner-developer of such first-class Pueblo de Oro Townships, it is a member of the ICCP Group, a group of companies primarily engaged in investment banking and allied investments, property development and services, and it is also venturing into Veren Logistic Properties Inc. and Beacon Property Ventures Inc.

THE COURTYARD model

Green tips to cool the house

GREEN ARCHITRENDS
Amando de Jesus

SHE WE can maximize indoor air comfort in hot humid summer weather is everyone's concern.

Passive designs of buildings includes strategies to maximize natural forces and phenomena that are useful, to minimize resource to active measures involving mechanical lighting and cooling systems.

Energy-efficient building design recognizes that it takes 5 UNIT of energy—from extraction to distribution—to deliver 1 UNIT of energy. Before we apply energy-saving technologies, we are being prudent to do a careful design of the building envelope and individual buildings using our natural resources.

Orientation

It seldom happens that good solar and wind orientation runs together, and so we make compromises. You are lucky if your lot is elongated and has a good wind orientation because that is where the sun's radiation falls. Since it is more heated in the morning, and the sun is high in midday, the sun is hotter on the west side.

It is better to locate the garage, storage and laundry area on the western side where it is not possible, a deep porch, window overhangs, shutters and roofshades make a big difference. Window openings on the hotter side should be small and preferably with roll-up screens.

Ground surfaces receive greater intensity of the sun's heat. Especially in the Philippine area, it is better to raise the floor perhaps by one story for practical purposes. Light flooring material can add to thermal comfort.

Openings at the windward side, if perpendicular to the wind direction receive good wind velocity. Generally, 45-degree openings to the wind direction experience increased air velocity and lessen air disturbances in the house. Air speed in general increases with building height.

Courtyard model

The courtyard model is common in hot countries. It achieves enough daylight penetration, reduces solar heat and promotes cooling breezes while keeping out hot and dusty wind. This is helpful but only for individual houses and buildings, but also in the urban scale.

Colonnades and verandas act as buffer to shade the inward-facing walls of the building from direct sunlight to control heat gain. Roof height is important because cool air slides down a sloping roof to the courtyard.

Stack effect

The stack effect is created as the courtyard heat builds up during the day and hot air rises. This will draw cooler air into the external spaces by creating upward forces. Air flow from window openings on the outside walls flow to the low-pressure area in the courtyard through the rooms, and add to the stack effect.

Plants and trees outside the building allow them while allowing and cooling the winds that pass through them.

Building envelope

Lightweight construction softens heat storage. The walls should be as transparent as light as open as possible to maximize movement of air inside the building.

Window openings oriented with maximum wind velocity through them. This can be diffused by roof overhangs, and shutters or blinds. Glare is harmful for the eyes.

Radiation is also disturbed by external surfaces and transferred to internal rooms throughout the day. It helps when the house occupants who wake up early open the windows to let hot air and mist bring in cool air, because the coolest part of the day is before sunrise. Some evaporative cooling open allows for night time cooling.

Light-colored paint on external walls and on the roof can bring down heat gain by up to 30 percent, insulating the ceiling and allowing heat to escape from the roof cavity through roof vents that do not affect the house occupants.

Flat roofs are exposed to the sun throughout the day, while pitched roofs always have parts of their surfaces shaded. Roof shapes should be oriented to prevailing breezes.

Roof shading can be done by way of metal or metal devices. This can also be done through vertical gardens.

Glare, unwanted heat level, an effect. The best source to make use. Trees we make use to roof the sun; both actions use energy. Therefore we resort to less-expensive glare to control heat gain.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail almobile@pldtdsl.net

Condo-buying experience depends . . .

From page B2-1

track record of the developer. That includes asking a BIR check on agents and brokers," he said.

Soriano added that buyers must ask these questions to the agent as organic part of the property firm? Is he/she an accredited broker? Is he/she on full time with property brokering or with the development?

He also urged buyers to ask to meet with the most senior head of the sales organization so you can have the assurance of a fair deal.

National Real Estate Association chair Reginaldo T. Medalla, for his part, said, "Basically, it all boils down to the choice of property and choice of agents."

He advised buyers to be wary of deals with new agents with no real estate experience. He said that buyer security would "hopefully improve with the strict implementation of the Real Real Estate Service Act (I am requesting PRC licenses for brokers and accreditation for agents."

Stress-free buying experience

Paul Vincent Chua, Colliers International associate director for valuation and advisory services and head of consultancy and research, said that with the amount of units being sold in the market these days, "what separates a good developer from one that is not is the quality of their agents."

"One of the primary responsibilities of the agent is to make sure that the buying experience of their client is as stress-free as possible. This is why the amount of paperwork agents anyway. Now, if the agent does not explain properly the requirements or the timelines needed to process the documents needed to complete the reservation, then the agent is at fault."

Chua added that "buyers must be fully informed and aware of their rights so let us be informed. If the agent cannot answer your questions, particularly on the documents, then you have the right to request for a different agent or talk with your agent's supervisor. It is their money and they have that right. You have to have everything done, documented and signed, no lonesay, no."

Sherwan broker and real estate educator Isicio S. Cruz also agreed that most of the complaints have basis.

"I have been receiving information on these unfortunate situations. The usual one is where the buyer signified something verbally and not in black and white with the 'agent' (who should be called a real estate salesperson) or in the developer who initially signed but later on denied."

IT would be best to deal only with reputable developers when buying a unit, whether you're an overseas Filipino or not.

REAL estate buying should never be an impulsive decision. Buyers must do an extensive research not only on projects but on the track record of the developer.

Chua said buyers should be advised to make all their communications with the developer or salesperson in written form, and property turnover by them. As much as possible, he said, buyers should diversify communications with the developer.

Careful

Buyers should be careful to read and fully understand the nuances of all the documents that they sign, specially the fine print. Buyers should also demand any explanation or rephrase be made in writing.

Chua said double sales are prohibited. Residential Decree 957 requires developers to register all sales made, even if on install-ment, with the Register of Deeds. Even though with this requirement, buyers should first verify the Transfer Certificate of Title or Condominium Certificate of Title before buying any property, if it is clear of any annotations of previous sale or mortgage.

Chua said that upon deposit or payment of down payment and signing of the Contract To Sell, buyers should take the initiative of registering the sale with the Register of Deeds. This will prevent the seller from making a second sale of the same property as if ours (buyer is a second buyer, the first buyer who registered the sale has the right over the property.

LGUs, HLURB

Chua said buyers should understand that prior to any condominium launched, it must be approved by the local government unit and the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board—two government agencies that should be able to identify based on their zoning plan the areas where residential buildings should be built. "Admittedly, some of our land-use plans are outdated and should be updated by the local government units, in order that the areas of the would-be buyers in those developments," Chua added.

Soriano said that in his engagements in other Asian countries, developer initiatives provide prospective homebuyers with a neighborhood directory that provides a detailed natural history of the area, contact information of local officials, support institutions like schools and hospitals as well as destination landmarks.

"This handy information provides a ready reference that includes shoebox notes. The intended purpose is prospective home buyers information before and after the selling process," Soriano concluded.

Rockwell Land casts...

From page B2-4

commitments to ensure that the entire development is country class.

3 A taste of The Grove, Rockwell Land easily knows how to satisfy the discerning palate of its residents, as it brings to the property local establishments that are category-over-the-top.

Sunrise Boulevard from Greenhills, Ortanez Ramen Bar and Restaurant and the maple from Rockwell will be found at The Grove. Some of the retail and food establishments already opened in December last year.

4 Ideal community. Rockwell Land prides itself in developing self-contained communities where everything members would need are just around the corner. While, a number of these businesses will be just up within The Grove, right outside the property are the so-called ex-postcode: world-class hospitals, schools, malls and shopping centers.

Add to that, the demographics—or the people who will be living in The Grove—are being born—will be composed mostly of newlyweds, start up and established families, emerging entrepreneurs and highly successful businessmen.

5 The Rockwell standard. Things followed the same building standards as previous Makati projects had—from the quality of the unit finishing, the landscaping and cleanliness of the common areas. The first features to pedestrians at the road and the surroundings and down to the personalized property management for all concerns.

With the units at The Grove are to be turned over by June this year, it won't be long before this property will again become one of the most coveted communities in the metro. As officials would always stress, The Grove is "definitely undoubtedly 100 percent Rockwell."

Recognizing the various types of glazing

DESIGN DIMENSIONS

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

THE WORLD has become a complicated place, hasn't it? We have so many options that it sometimes acts hurdles in the process of decision-making. Just like in the design field, the world of doctors makes finding the right things to put together more fun. I was going through the glass samples in my library and from what I managed to pick up, I can say that the industry has truly gained forward; what with so many options developed with new technology. Glass has also gone beyond merely being a functional element: it has become one of the most exploited decorative materials today.

Clear glass, the most basic of form, has many variants. The most basic type of glass—float glass—is commonly used in many years back but has since evolved into many other types. What looks like regular clear glass, today would have already been treated to be either annealed, tempered, or laminated—and this is just for starters...the latter runs being the most popularly used.

Treated

Annealed glass undergoes a process of heating and slow cooling in an annealing lehr so the glass tempered (sometimes called "toughened") glass on the other hand, is heated to a very high temperature, strengthening the glass but making it quite dangerous if it breaks. Tempered glass is made from raw, thin sheets of glass and a thin film in between, holding the glass together even when it shatters.

Annealed breaks into large knifed shards and is hardly used, except when budgets don't allow the safer glass options, and when it is used for small panels that are unlikely to break. Tempered is used for applications where glass rails falling on, and leaning, a person.

Frameless glass doors or very large window panels employ the use of tempered glass, because it breaks into beneficial fragments; possibly still causing cuts but almost guaranteeing no larger casualties, thanks to the sheer smallness of the broken pieces.

Now, if you don't want those broken pieces to fall, there opt for a laminated/tempered glass panel. This is my favored glass for "moving parts" like hinged glass panels on doors and windows, or framed shower enclosures. Understandably the safest. It's the type of glass used for car windshields. For large frameless doors though, a thick (12 millimeter) tempered glass panel will usually work for a normal sized panel.

Other types

There are other types of glass that are functional yet decorative, just like my favorite sandblasted glass. As shareable as that it captures fingerprints on its sandblasted side which is why it's rather a no-no in bathroom glass...nope not this glass, and apply a 200 film that introduces that "frosted" or sandblasted look. Though it will require a little more care in cleaning the film makes the glass look less greasy and hospital-like. Great for privacy smudges. What I like most about this just-looks glass treatment is that it diffuses light and creates as soft and ethereal atmosphere.

Then there's another type of sandblasted glass called the "sandtime" glass. Its sandblasted panels laminated together with the sandblasted sides face to face and the glazed sides exposed. It results in a denser sandblasting where only shadows or silhouettes are visible through the glass. I like using this for shutters enclosures and partitions where light needs to filter through but allows for more privacy. I've used these as free standing partitions or as glass walls, too.

Sustainability and issues regarding to heat control have become about low-emissivity glass, or "Low-E" glass. This type of glass is coated with a material that reflects radiant heat while allowing light to come in. It is used for external architectural applications like doors, windows, large picture windows and curtain wall systems. In essence, it keeps the heat—or cold—out. And because of that, it helps maintain the internal temperature of a space.

Another modern glass is the self-cleaning glass, which is manufactured with a coat of titanium dioxide creating ultra violet nanobonds to loosen dirt down organic material. (like bird poo, yes) that attaches to its surface. If also causes water to coat the glass to wash away the broken down material. This type of glass will work best where the weather constantly alternates between sun and rain (that sounds like now!). Whether it really works for practical applications, we still don't know for it is fairly new technology.

On the functional aspect, there are many other types of glass used for a specific performance required. The above are those you'll likely stumble upon when designing or constructing your spaces. The others may be a little too technical—and not very useful...or diverse here. As for the more creative types of glass? We'll go down next week!

Contact the author through designdimensions@gmail.com or through our Asuncion Berenguer Facebook account.

LION-EMISSIVITY glass will work wonders for spaces that have large windows like these, delivering radiant heat and maintaining the internal temperature of the rooms.

LIGHT RESIDENCES

Home is where the shops are

LIGHT Residences façade

REMAINS ENTERTAINMENT, work and relaxation right to one's doorstep, Light Residences is the perfect home for urbanites looking for mixed lifestyles. Developed by 3M Development Corp. (3MDC), the three-tower condominium project offers everything one needs for cruising and pleasurable living within easy reach.

A position level would house the Light mall, a hip lifestyle retreat that distinct to set it, because of homeowner's exclusive access. Residents can indulge a different cuisine every day at the mall's wide array of restaurants, while the cinema is perfect for spontaneous movie dates. Those eager for some retail therapy can take advantage of the regular fashion, home and specialty shops, for daily essentials, a quick stop at the SaveMore Market completes the convenience residents can ever have in your living space.

Providing unparalleled accessibility for residents, the five-hectare residential-cum-commercial development is strategically located right beside the Edsa-Boni MRT station. Whether by private vehicle or public transportation, it allows residents to reach the bustling commercial business districts such as Ortigas, Makati and Bonifacio Global City in just a matter of minutes.

After a hard day at work, homeowners can unwind and reenergize at Light Residences' amenity areas, complete with swimming pools, jogging paths, fitness gym, playground and spa.

Studio units, three types of one-bedroom units and two-bedroom units are available at affordable financing plans.

Live at the center of the CBD and be near to anywhere in Metro Manila when you a home at Light Residences.

Kawara joins Worldbex

KAWARA, a comprehensive roofing company whose products are specified by many top architects, designers and contractors, will showcase its exquisite products—primarily roofing materials imported from the world's machine-made clinkerers—at Bentle 9[illegible] 4836 of the World Building and Construction Exposition (Worldbex) 2012 at the Main Hall of the World Trade Center on March 14-16.

The company will showcase its latest roofing product, the Solar Roof Tile, an ecological roofing solution that incorporates watchwards into the roofing structure while maintaining the aesthetic qualities of modern roof design.

Leading through innovation has established Kawara as one of the top companies in the Philippine roofing industry today.

Kawara is the official distributor of prestigious heritage roofing brands such as Marsenge of Japan, Terratui of Germany, Terreal of France, Bellard of Korea, GAF of the United States, Wu Ding of China and Polymers Industries of Israel.

The company offers various roofing materials commonly used in the Philippine market such as clay tiles, ceramic stone-coated metal metal shingles and shakes and asphalt shingles.

THE HORIZON RESIDENCES

At the Horizon Residences, we give you not just what you need, but what you deserve.

Welcome to a new level of taste. Welcome to the Horizon Residences Pampanga. This is a place where your success translates to comfort and lifestyle living – a place where your family is our first.

Horizon Residences offer exquisite Zen-inspired homes within a secure 30-hectare Pueblo de Oro Community. It is adorned with modern amenities, gated relaxing patio and landscaped gardens. Simply put – it is pure balance of convenience, security, lifestyle and nature.

Balancing Family, Work, Leave, and Time for self. This is your Zen Lifestyle. Experience it at the Horizon Residences.

Pueblo de Oro Commercial Ave San Fernando Brgy. Del Carmen, City of San Fernando, Pampanga (063) [illegible] 3451 to 54

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DEVELOPER

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* Any special loan financing.

SUMMER GETAWAY

4 Baguio hotels spruce up cool service

Text and photos
by Tess R. Salazar

THEY'RE OUT to strengthen the city's longstanding reputation as the "Summer Capital of the Philippines," one room at a time. They feel that now is the time, as the tourism industry has been given a boost (and a quota of 93 million tourist arrivals by the Philippines by 2016 by the P-Noy administration), to spruce up the mid-level hospitality industry in Baguio City.

In February 2012, two new hotels hold their launches, while two established ones announced new offerings for the summer season.

MONDTEL Baguio

LE Mount lobby

All-suite for vacationers

Mondtel Residences, the first all-suite vacation residences, has finally opened in Baguio City. It presents holiday-goers to the city the full experience of a serviced apartment, complete with living, dining and kitchen facilities in all its rooms.

Its location is in a secluded hill five minutes from Session Road, to expect a more quiet and tranquil environment.

Imelda Bernardo, sales and promotions chief operating officer Duluh Ligaen-Ito said, "It is he?s to all that offers the brand of convenience and amenities of top international hotels, yet maintaining the natural texture and traditional character of the Philippines at a very affordable price."

It comprised of 99 suite rooms—46 deluxe suites, 17 one-bedroom suites, 33 two-bedroom suites and three bedroom suites—Suites offers a living area with a sofa bed and flat screen TV with cable connection; toilet and bath with hot and cold water and shower, tier, dining table and chairs and stocked kitchen appliances and utensils; coffee and tea-making facilities; queen sized beds with imported linens; balcony in choice rooms. The two- and three-bedroom suite's master toilet and bath have a bath tub.

It also features a lobby lounge, playground, WI-FI/DSL/PBX telephone connections, 24-hour front desk, room service, international and vacation services, laundry and dry cleaning management.

FACADE of the Avalon Residences

CJH's newest 'resident'

Le Monet Hotel, which held its grand opening in the last week of February, is now on Outlook Drive, Lualhati Road, Camp John Hay near a butterfly sanctuary and an eco-trail. It is also conveniently surrounded by retail shops, golf courses and restaurants.

The hotel has been named after the great French impressionist painter Claude Monet, and to experience staying in any of the hotel's 78 well-appointed rooms and suites is truly an example of "life imitating art"—with each having a veranda that its management said would "provide sweeping views and refreshing scents of pines." Each room comes with LCD Internet television, complimentary in-room Wi-Fi connectivity, mini bar, coffee, and tea making facility, well-stocked refrigerator, complete shower and bath amenities.

The lobby and its grand chandelier gives a touch of European elegance, and the Monet Room (her's pulsating club music takes guests on musical journey of the Internet beats. Le Monet also offers a fully equipped business center, gym, swimming pool and the Vida Verde Spa.

BIRD'S eye view of the heart of the summer capital

Best view of Panagbenga

One hotel, which sits right at the heart of Baguio City, probably occupies the most enviable location in the city, especially when it's the season for Baguio's most famous harvest...the Flower Festival or Panagbenga. Standing at the foot of Session Road across Burnham Park, a resort's throng away from the main shopping districts, is Hotel Veniz. Its address says it all: One Alabanza Street...and during the actual Panagbenga, the parade of flowers, celebrities and entertainers stop and perform at the very intersection where it stands. Virtually all major roads and the busiest pedestrian overpasses, converge at Hotel Veniz.

The hotel has been in operations since 2002, and has over 130 air-conditioned rooms and suites and 18 room types to choose from. It has eight function rooms for groups of 30 to 500 for conferences, workshops, seminars and parties. Hotel Veniz also maintains several restaurants.

The unusually strong mobile phone and Wi-Fi signals are due to a cell tower standing right above the building.

Expanding American brand

This "tower" of a hotel is going big in Baguio. Minded huts and Suites, which boasts of elaborate resort-approved landscaping, status the same American standard of style, design, amenities and service across all its other locations elsewhere in the country as well as in the United States.

"Even if you stay in a Microtel in the United States, you would see the same room than you see here. All Microtel has resort service in uniforms from the ground up, you can't do a convention," said Microtel Hotels Resorts area general manager for North Luzon Dennis Y. Gil.

The signature Microtel design includes a distinctively shaped roof top front, as well as many types of rooms, single, double and suite. "In our newer properties, we eliminate the single rooms to be more flexible, such as Microtel Inn in the Mall of Asia and in Boracay," Gil said.

As an inn, Microtel's ideal number of rooms should have been, at the most, up to 60. Recently, however, it is expanding that number.

Gil said the basis for locating a Microtel would be: 1) if the location is a tourist destination; or, 2) if it's near industrial parks. There are currently 9 operational Microtel inns: Baguio, Subic (near Subic Industrial Park), Cebu (Cebu Business Park), Mall of Asia (Pasay), Batangas, Cavite, Puerto Princesa in Palawan, Boracay Diniwid.

This year, he revealed, there will be more Microtel Inns: Iloilo, Dumaguete City, General Santos, El Nido, Tacloban and Santa Rosa, Laguna.

Gil said Microtel Inns in the Philippines have different ownership structures and different owners. It could be 100 percent franchisees or a joint venture.

"We're the hospitality arm of the Hinoma group. We're looking at 25 Microtel Inns by 2014."

Expanding Mimosa brand

Another hotel, which sits right at the heart of Baguio City, probably occupies the most enviable location in the city, especially when it's the season for Baguio's most famous harvest...the Flower Festival or Panagbenga. Standing at the foot of Session Road across Burnham Park, a resort's throng away from the main shopping districts, is Hotel Veniz. Its address says it all: One Alabanza Street...and during the actual Panagbenga, the parade of flowers, celebrities and entertainers stop and perform at the very intersection where it stands. Virtually all major roads and the busiest pedestrian overpasses, converge at Hotel Veniz.

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The unusually strong mobile phone and

THE 220-ha Batangas is the perfect setting for that much-awaited summer getaway

By Theresa E. Samaniego

IT IS where the sun meets the sea and the waves gently kiss the shore.

Easily a sanctuary as enchanting as the famed Anvaya Cove, nestled against the mountain ranges of Batangas and Zambales, can give one those picturesque, priceless memories of endless summer adventures that, as the cliché goes, can last a lifetime.

This 220-hectare exclusive enclave, according to Anvaya Cove general manager George Bernard L. Cadlit, still memorizes its members and redefine residential leisure living through its premier natural surroundings.

After all, the Anvaya Cove continues to provide that unique leisure experience of paranormal exclusivity, premiere resort amenities and most notably, proximity to a bustling regional hub known as Subic Bay Freeport.

And this unique living experience is such an exclusive get away is something that one, however, be hard at a price, as there is a need to sign up for membership in the club. Currently, Apulo offers two types, namely membership to the Beach and Nature Club, which is located at the cove and is the heart of Anvaya, and member slap to the Golf and Sports Club.

The Beach Club, according to Cadlit, is meant for light leisure while the golf will feature a harmony and a sports club which should complement the Beach Club.

"There are two clubs that we have and what we've done as a developer is actually secure a reciprocity agreement between the two clubs so that members of the Golf Club can use the Beach Club and vice versa," Cadlit said in an interview with business Property.

Living experience

Defining this Ayala Land Premiere development apart from other existing exclusive developments is primarily the living experience, Cadlit said.

First and foremost, going to the Anvaya Cove promises nothing else but ultimate relaxation in a sprawling development that offers green and panoramic mountain and sea views from your rooms. The images, as Cadlit had put it, are "really spectacular."

The development, he said, is already four years old but that "whole place still looks brand-new because this is our commitment to all our members—they pay their dues and we will maintain the quality of the place."

Another factor why Anvaya Cove is a perfect destination all throughout the year is the kind of personalized service it affords its guests.

"We conduct surveys among members and really the love thing that comes out in the survey is the hospitality. We have equipped the locals to be able to help us manage the resort," Cadlit noted, adding that to date, 98 percent of Anvaya's staff hail from Batangas and Zambales, where people are sure, courteous and amiable.

But what further makes this exclusive, by-members-only resort a top of the mind destination among investors and members?

Activities

"We have a number of activities for our members and they are informed through newsletters. We have four major activities in a year and on a monthly basis we have native bazi, F and B promos and other activities lined up for members," he said.

For those looking for action, Anvaya Cove hosts four major activities throughout the year, namely the Triple Race to Anvaya Cove, Anvaya Invitational Triathlon, International Kayaking Series and the Regatta.

But those wanting soothing massages and scrubs can opt to avail of spa treatments at the Nada Spa, which operates from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Daily members will never run out of things to do at the resort as it also features a number of trails that one can explore. "We have a nature camp and inside is the nature trail where you can see monkeys, birds. We are launching it in summer," Cadlit said. The other trail is the fitness trail that has stations for different fitness activities like push up, crunches and many other exercises. Lastly, we have the magma trail in the zip line," Cadlit narrated.

Aside from these activities, members can also enjoy the pool complex and other water sports activities like banana boat, speed boat, kayak, paddle boards, laser, bubble zo and the different summer sports activities like beach volleyball and football, which Anvaya Cove takes pride in.

Function rooms

The upscale resort development also has a number of rooms that members can use for a number of functions and celebrations.

"We have three function rooms: the Wine Room for the intimate dining experience, the Sinulan Room which can accommodate 100-120 people, and the Sandbar Lounge, an open-air area where the beach is swimming and where we can

chart weddings," Cadlit said.

Anvaya Cove also has a number of food and beverage outlets for the discerning palettes of its members including the Bamboo Café, which has a capacity of about 60 people, the Howzit Bar which is near the pool and the beach, and the Bonfire Beach Bar and Grill.

Best brand

And since it's backed by Ayala Land, members of Anvaya Cove are assured of the integrity of the developers.

"We have a lot of property development around Metro Manila and when you're an investor you look for the best brand name from the bounty of the development and whatever amenities that comes with it. But what really sets us apart is the stamp of Ayala Land with a track record that is actually beyond compare," Cadlit claimed.

In the end, Cadlit stressed that it all boils down to the living experience that Anvaya Cove provides its members.

"It's like paradise that's so near civilization. And it's really the enjoyment one can achieve. You have nature here, breath air, fitness, everything for the whole family. We have so many activities for everyone and we offer different kinds of experiences but most of the members they go to location to really just relax," Cadlit concluded.

The great Italian lifestyle at Milano Residences

By Theresa S. Sumaoang

OUR NATURAL affinity for anything Italian is evident in the way we enjoy their pizza, pasta and wine.

We admire their wine and flair for fashion and design. But more than all this, we love the way Italians encourage a redefine style, elegance and craftsmanship.

Italy is home to some of the greatest minds and talents like Enzo Ferrari, Leonardo da Vinci, Andrea Bocelli, Christopher Columbus, Filippo Brunelleschi, Michelangelo Buonarroti, making the country and its people the epitome of timeless beauty and sophistication.

And for sentimental, Italians have consistently set the benchmark for all things superior—from shoes to clothes, down to the interiors of their homes—without having to sacrifice comfort.

Luckily, Filipinos can have a taste of that rare Italian living through Century Properties' Versace Home-designed Milano Residences.

RESIDENTS who dress to have their units designed by Versace Home will have exclusive access to the brand's fine home collection.

MILANO Residences is one of only five Versace Home interior designed properties worldwide.

One of 5

Launched in late 2012, Milano Residences is one of only five Versace Home interior designed properties worldwide. The others are Hotel Plaza in New York City, Palazzo Versace hotels in Dubai and in Australia and Versace Tower in Beirut.

The 52-story residential tower being built at the Century City in Makati will showcase the distinctive mark of the Versace Home.

According to Century Properties Group Inc., the entire amenity area of the Milano Residences will be designed by Versace Home, allowing the project to have that authentic Italian flair.

"Versace of the residential masterpiece...from the grand lobby to the 5-story, 'Sistine'-styled, swimming pool and juice bar...will be draped in genuine Versace Home aesthetic," the company claimed.

Personalized services

Future residents can also choose to have their units designed by Versace Home or be advised by branded fine furniture pieces.

"Solid Own showcasing Versace Home's great interior detailing in the Milano's common areas, we are giving our residents the flexibility and distinction of cementing this exquisite experience into their own private space," added Robbie Antonio, Milano project head and CPG1 managing director.

"Versace Home is offering personalized interior design services for Filipinos living overseas," Antonio added.

According to him, residents who chose to have their units designed by Versace Home will have exclusive access to the brand's fine home collection and the rare luxury of having their own residence adorned with the art of essential living...an ethos the brand is highly known for.

"The Versace world is not just expressed in fashion, but in the full appreciation and creativity. Feminine love of beauty comes tailor-made interior design services and home furnishings that tell of a genuine lifestyle—one that truly shows what 'Made in Italy' is all about," said Gian Giacomo Ferraris, CEO of Daniel Venture SpA.

And such exquisite details are evident in the Versace Home line—from linens, tapestries, pillows to furniture, silverware, and glass and porcelain pieces.

Superior craftsmanship

"To be surrounded by finely crafted pieces will be the daily pleasures of a Milano resident," Antonio claimed, adding that "superior craftsmanship of one-of-a-kind and tailor-made pieces from the brand will be showcased in Milano."

Currently a hobbit sale...awesome piece by the brand—can be found at the Milano showroom in a pattern exclusively created for the building's grand lobby. A cashmere coffee table made of a crystal top and steel frame announces complements the soft-of-historical appeal.

Dining chairs upholstered in rich black leather and steel chrome tables engraved with the iconic five spirals of Versace Home's creative play of the classical and modern. Couches and pillows wrapped in purple velvet upholstery, crystal, glass and carved table lamps, as well as porcelain and silver tableware from the Essential collection are also some of the items on display at the Milano showroom.

"Milano residents will enjoy substantial value and will be proud of owning both an incredible investment and a symbol of a lifestyle never before seen in Manila," Ferraris concluded.

RLC opens its 30th mall in Calasiao

ROBINSONS Land Corp. is opening on March 15 its first full-service mall in Calasiao, Pangasinan—the 30th in its roster by growing chain of commercial centers.

According to RLC president Frederick Go, Robinsons Place Pangasinan is the newest and among the biggest shopping malls in the region, with a gross floor area of approximately 32,000 sq m and a gross footprint of approximately of 20,000 sq m built over six ha lot.

Inspired by stores, Robinsons Place Pangasinan resembles a continuous campus from the outside. Inside, it has large atriums to give it a bright and spacious feel.

Go said RLC chose Calasiao for its first mall in Pangasinan because the first-class municipality is strategically located between Dagupan City and San Carlos City, both thriving commercial areas of the province.

Connected via a major highway, Calasiao is just 15 minutes from Dagupan and 25 minutes from San Carlos City.

Go said the two-level Robinsons Place Pangasinan is already over 90 percent leased with Robinsons Supermarket Store, Robinsons Supermarket, Handyman, Robinsons Appliances and Robinsons Movieworld as anchor tenants.

Tenants in the mall include National Book Store, Puma and Penshoppe, Bed Inn, Bench, Bar Inn, Mercury Drug, Mang Inasal, Chic Boy, Jollibee, Greenwich, Chowking, Red Ribbon, Tokyo Tokyo, Kenny's Grill, Bluebird, Pan de Manila and Quezonian Restaurant Center.

Dining options in Robinsons Calasiao include an 800 plus square meter food court with a seating capacity of almost 600 in the second level, snack stands around the mall, an

Park Place
Enjoy city living with a suburban flair.

*No Downpayment Needed

Your dream home awaits you at Park Place. Contemporary Asian homes designed with all your needs in mind. "Park" your cares as you experience easy living. Away from the hustle and bustle of life, close to everything - to nature, and close still to working all your dreams come true. Your family will enjoy an exciting new way of life, the sophistication of city living mixed with the natural beauty of residential suburbia.

The master-planned residential village is part of the 84-hectare Pueblo de Oro Communities in San Fernando, Pampanga. Your family will feel at home in this sophisticated community. Enjoy the best of both worlds, city living with a suburban flair, only at Park Place.

Now you can live a life that's picture perfect!

Pueblo de Oro
PAMPANGA
COMMUNITIES

Lito Cesar D. Mangawang

SCIENCE/HEALTH

PHILIPPINE Glaucoma Society officers, led by its president Nelson Jo (2nd from left), and founder Aquino (5th from left), are in full force to welcome the upcoming World Glaucoma Week observance in the Philippines.

Preventing the 'sneak thief of sight'

Text and photos by Charles E. Butan

LOCATED AT the back of our eyes are bundles of nerve fibers—called the optic nerves—that serve as communication cables between our eyes and our brains.

Within each of these 1.5-mm- to 2-mm-diameter nerves are about 1.2 million exposed-by-thin nerve fibers, which when affected by disease or subjected to intense or excessive pressure could suffer irreversible damage.

One of the conditions that could injure the optic nerve is glaucoma, characterized by the gradual blurring of vision, especially at night, seeing halos or rainbows around lights, experiencing severe headaches or eye pain, redness (although our eye of glaucoma exhibits no symptoms as the individual loses peripheral vision if not go completely blind without warning).

"Glaucoma is thought to be the primary reason for preventable loss of vision and in fact, statistics show that over the 5 million people around the world suffer from the disease, of which 1.5 million of them are already blind in both eyes," informed Philippine Glaucoma Society president Dr. Maria Imelda Yap Nelson during the launch of World Glaucoma Week held at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

World Glaucoma Week will be celebrated between March 12 and 16.

She added that the No. 1 cause of blind and permanent blindness in the Philippines is brought about by the increased pressure around the optic nerve.

No symptoms

"The most concerning (but also) most type of glaucoma is that distinct from other causes of blindness, it is asymptomatic (no symptoms) until it may be too late," she lamented.

But while glaucoma is described as the "sneak thief of sight" because of lack of any obvious symptoms, it is still possible to prevent the disease, noted Dr. Rainier Covan, member of the Philippine Glaucoma Society's research committee.

"Early detection of the disease is crucial in effective management. Although glaucoma risk is universal, particular groups are at higher risk than others. Risk factors for glaucoma may include those over 45 years old, anyone with family members who have had glaucoma, a predisposition toward diabetes, or known eye problems such as high intraocular pressure," Covan described.

In observance of the World Glaucoma Week, the Philippine Glaucoma Society members will conduct free eye checkups on select hospitals nationwide.

"World Glaucoma Week was established in response to the worldwide concern over the increasing number of people with glaucoma. If these people do not have the condition detected and treated right away, more people, including Filipinos, are at risk of going blind from this disease," announced Dr. Mario Aquino, the founding president of Philippine Glaucoma Society.

He added that World Glaucoma Week aim to educate more people about how to assess their risk for glaucoma and to be aware of the importance of regular eye examinations and disease detection.

Comprehensive exam

"Although there are glaucoma eyedrops that could aid in reducing the risks that diseases can present, one has to undergo comprehensive eye exams first (must be conducted by an ophthalmologist) as this is the only way to detect glaucoma in its early stages. As a general rule, have comprehensive eye exams every three to five years after age 40 and every year after age 60. You may need more frequent screenings if you have glaucoma risk factors," Covan suggested.

There are several tests that an ophthalmologist could perform, including tonometry, a simple, painless procedure that measures one's intraocular pressure.

Another is one that checks the fibers in one's optic nerve. Here, the eye doctor employs instruments that look directly through the pupil to the back of the eye. This can reveal slight changes that may indicate the beginnings of glaucoma.

A visual field test could also be done to check whether the visual field has been affected by glaucoma. The doctor uses a special test that evaluates peripheral vision.

"Often said a comprehensive test would cost about P500 to about a few thousands, depending on clinics or hospitals.

"Remember early detection is vital to stopping the progress of the disease as there is no cure for glaucoma, yet. However, medication or surgery can slow or prevent further vision loss. This upcoming observance of the World Glaucoma Week is significant to every Filipino as our ranks will join forces to help more FIL (almost preserve) their sight," Nelson said.

Playing 'dam'-inoes

DISCOVER

Marjorie Sanchez Mallion

THE MEKONG River provides food, water and transportation for more than 60 million people in five countries. In recent decades, however, the river has also become an important power source as dams help generate electricity from hydropower.

The push to generate more electricity from hydropower has led to plans for dozens of dams to be built on the Mekong and along its branches by 2030. A recent study by Cambodian and American researchers calls for a review of these proposed sites so that nations dependent on the river can better assess the impacts of the dams.

Catastrophic impacts

"We find that the completion of 78 dams on tributaries, which have not previously been subject to strategic analysis, would have catastrophic impacts on fish productivity and biodiversity," Princeton ecologist Gop Tir and his colleagues wrote in their paper.

The Mekong River starts in the Himalayan and flows through five South-east Asian countries, before reaching the South China Sea. Representatives from Cambodia, Laos (PDR), Thailand and Vietnam met together to maintain and develop those resources as the Mekong River Commission (MRC). For more than 60 million people who live in the Mekong River Basin (MRB), the river provides livelihoods, food, water and a source of transportation. Fish from the Mekong provide as much as 80 percent of the animal protein eaten by those who live by the river, and nearby rice fields benefit from both the water and nutrient-rich sediments when the level of the river exceeds its banks.

By 2015, dams are expected to be in place along the Mekong River and its branches, generating nearly 3000 TWh (tera-watt-hour) of electricity annually. (For comparison, the International Energy Association reported that the Philippines consumed nearly 51 TWh of electricity in 2009.) In their study, Tir and his fellow researchers noted that dams built along the branches of the Mekong River are not under the jurisdiction of the MRC, which means neighboring nations may not be completely aware of how these dams might impact them.

Scenarios

The researchers modeled several scenarios to determine how fish populations fared in relation to the number of dams built and where they were situated. For example, the 2015 scenario with 41 dams saw nearly 60 fish species considered "vulnerable." In contrast, one scenario for the year 2030 features 78 dams built on the Mekong or along its tributaries, resulting in more electricity generated, but the corresponding loss of fish migration paths results in 100 fish species being considered "critically endangered."

Based on their models, Tir and his colleagues found that the projected locations of the dams, particularly along the branches of the Mekong River, had a greater impact on fish populations than the number of dams being built.

"In recent years construction of hydropower dams has increased at an unprecedented rate. It is now estimated that 50 percent of all large rivers have been affected by dam construction. Although socioeconomic progress is desirable, sustainable development requires that unnecessary risks to ecosystems and environmental services, such as fish production and biodiversity, be avoided. In the 2030s we find that some hydropower projects can and should be avoided," the researchers concluded.

The study was published ahead of print March 5 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA.

E-mail the author at mssanchez@inquirer.com

Remembering Gani

MEDICAL FILES

Rafael Castillo

IT CAME as a shock when I learned from the papers on Monday this week that our highly esteemed publisher, Gani Pambid, had passed away a few days earlier. So much have been written and said about him. Even in his death, the many life lessons he had imparted on those who had the privilege to have known him, still continue to touch the lives of these people and many more who had heard of Gani's goodness and valor to stand for what he believed in.

About two months ago, Grace Mangawang, our section editor, texted me one evening that Gani needed some health advice. I rang him up but he was probably still busy at the office putting the day's issue to bed, so he wasn't able to take the call. He called me up later and his voice carried the usual vibrant tone I had always associated with him. "Yo doc, 'kamot here," he greeted.

For a reason or so, we exchanged friendly banter of what both of us were occupied with and the advocacies we were "passionate about." "Ser ang nagpapahelp ng dugs sa ambulasyon natin (That's what keeps me blood circulating)," I would tease him telling him. And ever witty and sharp as he was in quickly making a smooth transition in any conversation, he answered, "Speaking of circulation, I want to consult you about my bone condition."

Dilemma

He conveyed to me his dilemma about undergoing the recommended surgery for his heart. He got to me early after the following week after he had gathered all his laboratory results. But no sense got to see such other symptoms. I thought he was so busy, as he always was, that was why he never got to call again. I knew he had a highly competent team of heart specialists according to him, and I felt assured that he was in good hands.

As I told his brother Glenn in the weeks this week, I feel bad not having attended Gani about the meeting we agreed on the week after we talked on the phone. It would probably not have made a difference if I saw him before he agreed to his surgery. I would probably have gone into the same advice for it just makes me feel bad that I didn't exert as much effort to make sure that I got to give him even just a tiny bit of additional advice, not necessarily from a medical professional's point of view, but from a personal acquaintance.

It was probably nine years ago when I last saw Gani. The few times that I visited the business office, I would occasionally bump into him in the hallway, and despite his busy schedule, he would invite me to his office and exchange pleasantries. He was so approachable, so humble, good-humored and very energetic. He didn't look his age, too. I remember one time we guessed about each other's age. He was only two years off when he guessed mine but I was 10 years off when I guessed his. I thought he was 10 years younger.

Fickleness of life

Gani's death somehow reminds us of the fickleness of life. No one can tell when one's end will come. One may be so strong one day and a momentary lush in the heartbeat can make the heart stop suddenly. And as death isn't fair, too.

I think day but to be kind to one another, and Gani showed everyone how excellently this could be done. While many his age would rather bask in the sunset and have an easy life routine, he preferred to pursue his passion in writing, editing and publishing. He was a perfect model of how to age gracefully and continue the meaningful life one has chosen to live.

I may not have had the privilege to interact closely with Gani's family with Mr. Nestor, but he had inspired me and still continues to do so to continually strive to be a better writer and editor.

Mourning relative, Gani! Rest thee well as you rest your pen and go on a place where you won't need any pen anymore. No more printing machines. No more publishing gadgets and electronic gizmos. Just a panorama of heart and spirit which you have always had even while still here.

Strong bones and stronger ties

ASIAN WOMEN (like Filipino women) are more likely to get osteoporosis because our bones are thinner than those of their Caucasian counterparts. The belief that osteoporosis is prevalent in Western countries and rare in Asia is a myth. This was validated by the recent IOF International Osteoporosis Foundation) audit report.

Which is rapidly aging Asian population, osteoporosis is becoming a very serious and growing threat in Asia, particularly because it is often under-recognized and underreported disease in this region. Database projections by the World Health Organization (WHO) indicate that by 2050, more than 50 percent of all osteoporotic hip fractures will occur in Asia. Further, some 18 to 20 percent of people suffering from hip fractures die within a year of suffering the fracture, making it a disease that will significantly impact the region's population.

Loss of normal bone density

But what exactly is osteoporosis? Osteoporosis, a condition that features loss of the normal bone density, is the culprit behind those carrying spines and loss of height. As an advanced stage, the disease can lead to porous bones that fracture easily—the spine, hips, wrists, and almost any other part of a person's skeletal system.

Called the silent disease, osteoporosis can affect a person's bones for years and may remain undetected beneath the cover of skin, only to reveal itself in the event of an excruciatingly painful fracture, which may give subsequent complications, including chronic pain, disability, a diminished quality of life and even premature death.

Quite apart from the very real physical problems associated with osteoporosis, the disease comes with hefty socioeconomic costs as well. Hospitalization stays related to hip fractures are often longer than those of other diseases such as breast cancer, prostate cancer or even heart disease, and can cost more in total. In fact, the IOF has forecast that the worldwide cost of osteoporosis will have reached an enormous US$131.5 billion by 2050.

Highly preventable

Unlike those other diseases though, osteoporosis is highly preventable, by maintaining a healthy diet, adequate levels of calcium and vitamin D intake, and by moderate exercise throughout life, and reducing risk factors such as smoking and limiting your alcohol intake.

The IOF report has noted that widespread vitamin D deficiency and low calcium intake throughout Asia are important factors to consider in understanding bone health issues for the region. The average dietary calcium intake for the adult Asian population is only 458 mg/day far below the 1042/1000 recommendation for calcium intake of 1000-1,200 mg/day.

The problem, however, is that there is a serious lack of awareness about osteoporosis among both healthcare professionals and the public in most countries. The IOF report notes that as proven, most treatments, prevention and education efforts are limited to urban areas—a significant issue given that the majority of the population in populous countries such as China and India still live in rural areas.

Urgent need

There is an urgent need therefore, for Asian countries to understand more about this preventable disease and take action to fight it.

Treatment has been doing its part in the fight against osteoporosis, spending more than US$40 million on bone research and development in the last decade to better understand the disease, including 15 human clinical trials on bone health in the last eight years.

Since 2003, the bone has been providing free ultrasound bone scans through the Asian Bone Health Check across Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Indonesia to help educate people about the health of their bones.

But public awareness and education programs can only go so far. Individuals must recognize the severity of the problem and make a conscious decision to make changes in their lifestyles. Only then can we create a world without osteoporotic fractures.

Babies benefit from mothers' plant-based diet, say scientists

Text and photo by Tessa B. Salazar

SCIENCE MAY now have the evidence to convince expectant mothers to eat even more veggies, and shun the meat altogether.

Neuroscientist Cauter Descarte, a department of Science and Technology Skills Scientist who is now in Japan for further research on the human brain, has been urging pregnant women "to eat less meat," or even go as far "go vegetarian."

"This is consistent with the ADA (American Dietetic Association) recommendation for the suitability of vegetarian diets for pregnant women," Descarte said.

Descarte recently e-mailed Inquirer.net Science and Health a scientific paper that he recently got hold of indicating a diet predominant with meat could lead to fetal programming of genes involved in the stress responses of the developing baby.

The author of the paper, Harold Jan, showed that a vegetarian diet of rice bran concentrates and fish weight among babies born in Malaysia. (The study is titled "Higher intake of fruits and vegetables in pregnancy is associated with birth size".) He has expressed willingness to be interviewed by this writer, a three-way interview with Descarte and Jan is currently being planned.

Descarte initially explained Jan's study: "The more babies born to mothers who love meat became more stressful." He added: "babies with hyperactivated stress axis tend to grow up as adults who have difficulty managing their anger, are more aggressive and have higher risk for heart disease."

Carter stressed that this maternal dietary factor has never been studied in detail in the Philippines.

"The HPA or hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (or stress response) of the baby is altered by regenetic consumption by pregnant mothers. Obesity, too, can be programmed in the genes by maternal overnutrition. Weirdly, what you eat while you're pregnant determines how your baby will eat, when it becomes an adult."

SCIENTISTS are asking expectant mothers to eat more veggies and fruits. The alternative is worrying babies learn to swallow who eat more meat than fruits and vegetables become overly stressful.

Do you have questions for Descarte and Jan? Be part of the discussion. E-mail your questions and concerns at tsalazar@inquirer.com.ph.

How teeth, jaws, imagination can boost health

New fitness and exercise book reveals visualizations with physical exercises using your entire body designed to boost your chakra energy centers and extend your lifespan

AUSTIN, Texas—"Yin Ain't Yang, The Ancient Way to Better Health, by Lenore Zawitzki MSW, reveals how the teeth, tongue and jaws are powerful reiki chan, combined with meditation and exercise, can unlock vital energy that may improve overall health, fitness and longevity.

According to Zawitzki, modern science is beginning to understand the ancient wisdom about the link between healthy teeth, gums and jaw function and boosting general fitness, health and longevity.

Scientists have discovered new compelling evidence proving that teeth are joined to vital organs by way of the energy channels (internal pathways of Qi) and when the teeth, tongue and jaws are included in a regular meridian exercise routine you can access and refine the body's chakras (life support energy centers) to promote a long, healthy and strong existence.

New way

Meditative exercise using your teeth, body and mind in this new "evolution art" may also relieve stress, improve cardiovascular function and flexibility, increase bone density, balance hormones, circulate lymph, detoxify organs, increase brain function, promote sexual health and induce overall happiness.

"Yin Ain't Yang, The Ancient Way to Better Health" is intended for martial artists, yoga and tai chi practitioners, martial artists, as well as the public interested in physical fitness for health and longevity. Zawitzki offers a series of energy-building visualizations and physical exercises aimed at strengthening and aligning the chi centers of the soul/entity with the parent centers of the body. "Practicing these exercises can lead to a deeper understanding of man's place in the cosmos and boost one's overall health and fitness," says Zawitzki. "I want my readers to increase their fitness, health and longevity by returning to the original energetic purpose of their teeth and jaws."

Dr. Lenore Zawitzki has been a practicing dentist for over 30 years. Since 2004, he has been devoted to researching research into the relationship between whole body detoxification, fitness and longevity. Zawitzki is an author of self-help, fitness and meditation books, practices martial arts and has been a student of tai chi and qigong for over 25 years.

"Yin Ain't Yang, The Ancient Way to Better Health" is the third in a series of fitness and meditation books after "Teeth in Martial Combat" and "The Tao of Teeth." It is available online at Amazon.com and other channels.

—BMD Newswire

Editor Cesar D. Manguerra

PROPERTY

Rockwell Land casts magic spell anew at The Grove

By Thomas S. Tamayo

THE GROVE's "delicately undeniable [100-percent Rockwell]."

THE RECOGNITION of the Rockwell brand often evokes a familiar mood but it is one that evokes only a sense of prominence, prestige and space. This is perhaps why, even after more than 16 years in the real estate industry, Rockwell Land's upscale residential condominium development in Makati continues to be the most coveted address by the country's affluent.

With its groundbreaking source idea that touched off the 21-hectare site of a decommissioned power facility into the bustling Rockwell Center, the Lopez-led property firm has since proven that it belongs to a class of its own, in terms of building design, quality and exacting among other factors that contribute to the company's legacy.

The name "Rockwell Magic" is now being replicated in an effort this outside the confines of the all-familiar Rockwell Center. Located on 12-road, The Grove by Rockwell is the company's first residential enclave outside Makati. As officials find out it, the company has brought its "signature Rockwell lifestyle outside the walls of its prestigious Rockwell Center."

This only means loving the same experience of convenience, quality and exclusivity that is synonymous in all its previous developments.

So what can a future resident of The Grove expect? Officials tick off some of the more notable features that can only be had at a Rockwell development:

1 Seventy-five percent nature, 25-percent man. The high demand for residential space has forced most developers to maximize small spaces. But something that more than a concrete jungle, Rockwell officials noted that due to the emergence of so many developments in Metro Manila, the quality of space has now become an issue.

The Grove, however, prides itself of having 75 percent open space, making it the premier suburban urbanist development. It currently boasts bike trails, jogging paths and abundant greens within the property.

2 Safety by Rockwell. Residents of The Grove can live comfortably knowing that the company has brought its unparalleled standard of being "Eternal Protectors."

For one, well-trained and reliable security personnel will be making rounds within the entire development 24/7.

The Grove by Rockwell will also have 100 percent backup power in case power outages occur. If, likewise, peripheral areas do not design technologies by Rockwell and real-liquidate

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Super LIFESTYLE
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SOMETHING DIFFERENT!
So thick & creamy.
It's served upside down.
CELEBRATE!
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Dairy Queen

The coolest 'lolo'

Inquirer's youngest employees pay tribute to Isagani Yambot —publisher, mentor and all around Super guy

GARRULOUS: Speaking for the Editorial Department's holiday video presentation

SIR GANI'S desk

WHENEVER I'd run into Sir Gani at the office, he would always greet me with a supportive "Oy, kumain ka! Be one millimeter."

I like to think he greeted Death in that same playful manner. Maybe made some pun about meeting the deadline.

Rest in peace, Sir Gani. Thanks for the "takeout" items. You will be remembered in very fondly. —Jaymar Gani B, reporter

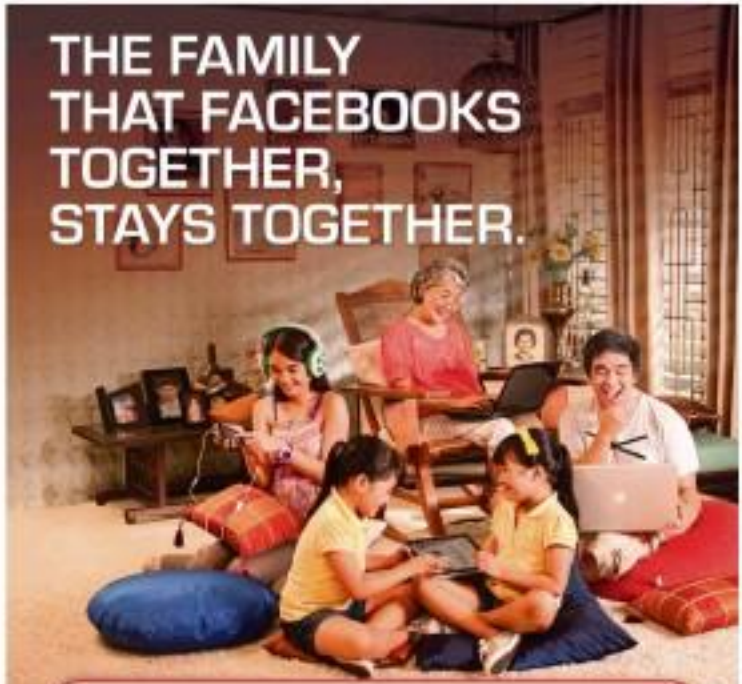
(Any person po ako kay Sir Gani, eh. He knew an uncle of mine, Papa Joy, and from time to time Sir Gani would ask me, "O kumusta na si Joy?" (Joey is my uncle's other nickname.)

Papa Joy passed away in April last year due to cardiac arrest. Around the same time, Sir Gani also had a heart attack and underwent angioplasty. When Sir Gani came back to work, I found myself dodging him because I was afraid he'd ask me how my uncle is and I didn't want to be the bearer of sad news. I didn't want to make him upset and make him worry more about his own health.

I can confidently say that Sir Gani is one of my most favorite bosses. He was always gracious and pleasant. He was never arrogant and condescending. Neither did he pass judgment quickly. He was the publisher, yes, but he'd be the one to come over and say hi and make small talk. He was always game to joke around, was not afraid to look silly and was always ready with a pun. He always had something nice to say to everyone. And if it wasn't something nice (like when he'd tell me I put on weight), he'd still say it in an indirect way ("You look like you're putting on weight [sees the look on my face] ...maybe a pound." Even though we both could see it wasn't just "a pound").

For a lot of us, the Inquirer has become our home away from home. And Sir Gani was our fatherly front honcho.

THE FAMILY THAT FACEBOOKS TOGETHER, STAYS TOGETHER.



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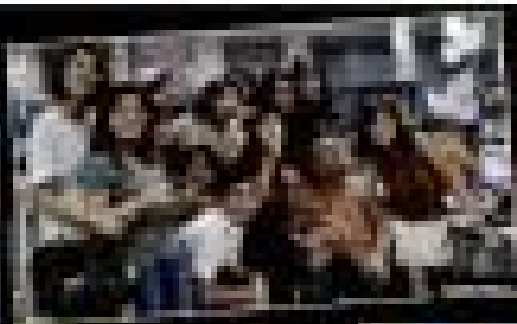
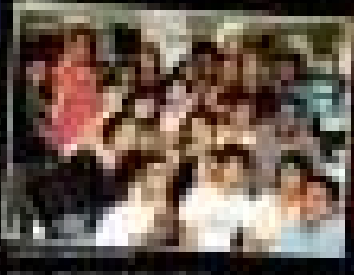
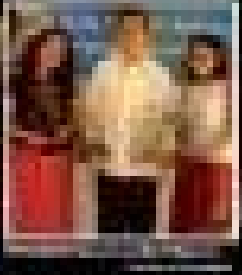
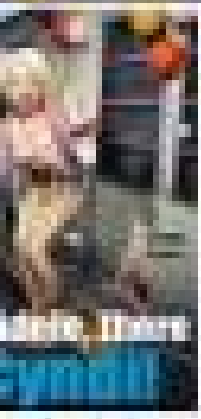
The Smash bands of summer: Dashboard Confessional and The Used

The coolest 'lolo'

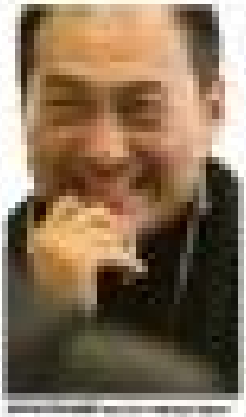








Beyond the tsunami



A whole lotta Soul

Meet the Flippin' Soul Stompers, and find out why they're playing "the roots of rock'n'roll"

SOUL music is all about—I don't have all I know of soul music growing up were from feel-good movies on HBO. Also I subscribed of listening James Brown's "I Got You (I Feel Good)" from films like "The Mighty Peabodys"? Yes of course. Also I obsessed about being conditioned to love Marvin Gaye's "Let's Get It On" in a Hollywood sitcom hell to engage a self-aware sex scene ("Austin Powers," "Bridget Jones' Edge of Reason," "Something's Gotta Give," "Crossroads"? Hahaaa

LIFESTYLE Travel

From old houses to hot springs, this Quezon destination is worth a trip

Tiaong has its come-ons

By Amelia S. Tayao

IF THERE is one thing we can learn from the people of Tiaong, Quezon, it is having pride of place. Proof of this is the recent publication of "Tiaong: Coming Into Its Own," a collectable book written by Abe Florendo, with archival research by Darlee Recio Bayhay and Dr. Luis C. Dery.

The book shows what modern-day Tiaong, around 100 km south of Metro Manila, has to offer—tourist spots, and even the basics, such as real estate prices, social and educational services, infrastructure.

The book also has the town's origins, pre-Spanish-colonial rule, the control it went through in the Spanish, American and Japanese eras, and its significant role in the wins against Dario explains.

It's a history book and travelogue in one colorful, informative package, showcasing what and why Tiaong is the way it is today.

Cito Aquino, a Tiaonguin and founder of the LaSalle-Lipa Foundation who spearheaded the creation of this book, writes in the introduction: "Tiaong, and the people of Tiaong, deserves a book like this. A book on and for Tiaonguins by Tiaonguins."

Chapters are devoted to exactly that—the people of Tiaong.

"Here is Glen M. Recio, father of the 2005 Philippine Constitutional General Dr. Fe, a Quezon-Filipino star born in China, but who was born and raised with Tiaong as 'Tiaong to the Us' and Francisco Mercado City is one of the more leading leaders. Here also Florendo's, who built the well-known resort Villa Escudero; priest Ups Reyes; and prominent families like the Escuetas and Ojedas.

Story Tiaong, at age 71, was invited in 1969 by Ben Escudero's Cory Aquino to visit his home town for two weeks. He had a reunion with his siblings, who had an idea of Tiaong's accomplishments during the 39 years they were apart. Tiaong was also able to visit his mother's grave.

Featured, too, are some of the town's noted farmers, entrepreneurs, merchants, individuals.

The book took years to finish, says Bayhay, who completed research in one year. "There was surprises," she says. "Cito (Aquino) wanted to know the exact date of the founding."

They found out that Tiaong, then called Nieves, became a visita (a village with a chapel where services were periodically performed by a visiting priest") in 1650; although before that, there was already a settlement ruled by the "Gats," relatives of native royal leader.

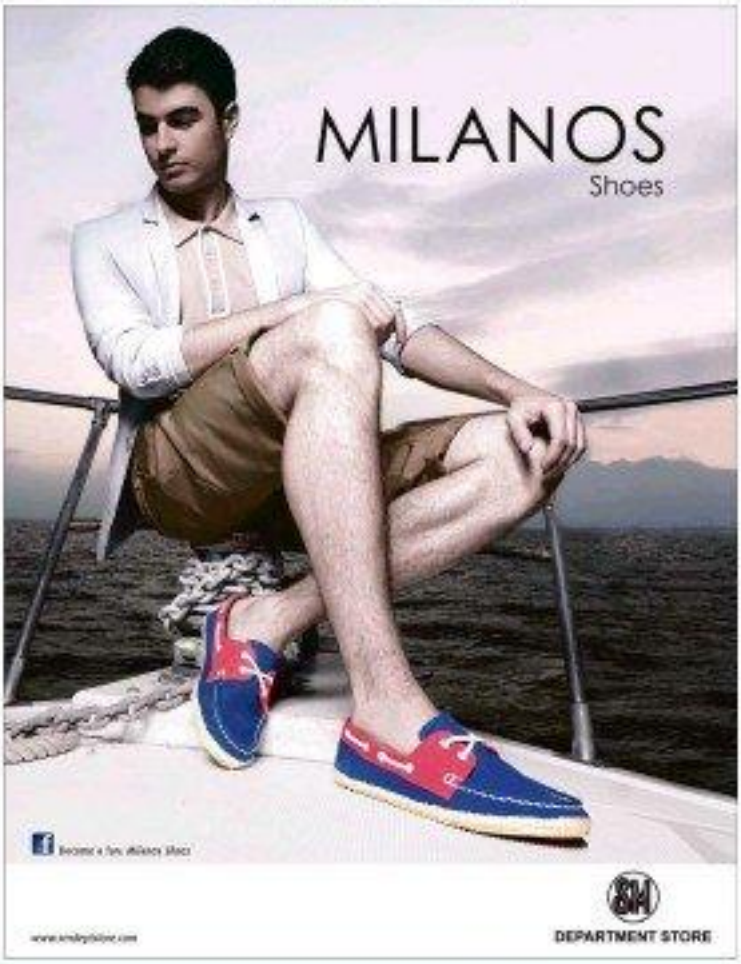
Aside from archival research, Bayhay says she and author Florendo went around Tiaong to interview "old-timers."

"We had to search them at their most favorite moments," she says. "If any makasali sila on a certain topic, siyempre tuwa na sila. (If they are considered about a certain topic, then it

BOOK cover shows skyscrapers designed by Tiaong's Tarak Lim

JRS EXPRESS
YOUR PARTNER IN TIME

HARVEST Spring (left) Salver and son prep the fish salver and ice cream fundraising



VIEW of the private beach and one of the suites at the Garden Cliff Resort & Spa, Pattaya

Massaged by an elephant, amazed by 'ladyboys' –there's more to Thailand than shopping

We knew it was a transvestite cabaret show, but we still sat there asking ourselves "Man or woman?"

THE INTERIOR of The Sanctuary of Truth

By Carmencita S. Sioson
Lifestyle Features

BITWEEN photo shoots, deadlines, and minor dilemmas, I was definitely looking forward to a breather, so it was my first trip to "The Land of Smiles," my thoughts could be summed up in four words: Thailand, here I come!

My first day got off to a pretty rough start. Still recovering from a previous trip and let down by my cell phone, which decided to go on a coma for the entire time, I muddled myself by making a mental checklist of things I wanted to buy.

With all the attractions to see and places to visit, however, I never did get to that list.

Must-see places

The Grand Palace complex, established in 1782 with four towering walls (1,900 meters in length), certainly is grand. Covering an astounding 218,000 sqm and surrounded by lush greenery, it simply is an overwhelming sight.

Before we could be allowed past some uptown-looking guards, those of us wearing shorts (the fence footsome were asked to cover up with sarongs. Even worse is Bermuda shorts were required to cover up. With the dozens of tourists queuing to rent sarongs in the vicinity, we decided to rent sarongs outside, across the street from the complex.

Hosting the royal residence, throne halls, a number of government offices, and the renowned Temple of the Emerald Buddha, this place is sacred to the Thais, thus the strict policies. That didn't stop us, however, from taking our photos with another Thai gate schoolgirls all the while asking permission from our tour guide to make sure we weren't breaking any rules.

I walked in the sweltering afternoon heat entranced by the gilded and embellished facades, especially by the Temple of the Emerald Buddha. Not wanting to seem like a trespasser, I knelt in one corner and admired the locals who prayed intently and watched ancients stare in amazement at the Buddhist statues, symbols of great jade and dressed in intricate maroon costumes.

Another place of grandeur is The Sanctuary of Truth. Made entirely of wood, it has that old-world appeal. It provided me a great escape from the heat.

Still in groundbreaking in 1981, the objective was to build a wooden structure that would preserve and revive the ancient knowledge of Thai artists who would build a wooden structure of more that 100 meters high (a 26-story modern building). In its intricate woodwork, The Sanctuary of Truth shows the relationship between man and the universe—"the truth of being human" as Thais referred to it.

At the center of the sanctuary is an area with pillows where one could pray peacefully, no matter one's religion. So for a few minutes, I silenced the thoughts in my head and felt a sudden sense of calm and contentment.

My visit was made even more significant when I serendipitously met the artist behind the marvel's carvings. Intrigued by his ornate wooden nest, I politely asked if I could get a photo of him and was told later on that he was actually the chief artist.

He served generally endless from room and nod, the Sanctuary of Truth, which covers an area of more than 3,200 sqm, will continuously be rebuilt to maintain its pristine condition. As our tour guide said, "its construction will never really be finished."

My favorite part was from hand carved wooden sculptures to manicured lawns at the Million Isles Winery owned by Thai-era leading actress-Supamas Nuangsiharasi. Stepping into this 100 hectares land complete with a windmill and a restaurant was like stepping into my very own Wonderland. Grapevines, vivid flowers, and large shrubs that adorn the vast landscape and a number of charmingly decorated spots make this park perfect for picnics, romantic picnics, and of course, sightseeing—with a grape juice in hand, one of the vineyard's products.

For the more adventurous, the park offers visitors the option of taking a ride on a horse-drawn carriage, on a paddleboat on the lake, on an all-terrain vehicle, or on top of an elephant.

If you haven't had enough of elephants, Nong Nooch Garden and Resort, which also has the largest variety of orchids in Thailand (more than 670 species), certainly has a lot of elephants to entertain you. A 37-year-old male elephant with 24 wives and 36 children was the proprietor of all the elephants in Nong Nooch. The plant grew more than 2,000 species daily.

I watched elephants paint trees, dance, play a competitive game of basketball and bowling, and so on. A mischievous one even threw his bowling ball into another elephant's alley and scored a strike. But the icing on the cake was when I joined in the spectacle and got a massage from an adult elephant, whose fairly light swaging and massage was more good enough to not cut my coincidental bath pats.

If you want to "meet and greet" Hollywood A-listers, Madame Tussauds' wax figures—called by one imaginative—should do the trick. So I convinced myself with easy rosy conversations and, of course, various photo-ops with the stars. From a coffee date with George Clooney to an interview with Oprah Winfrey I was definitely star-struck.

Spectacular shows

One of the things I also admired about Thailand was the Thais' adherence to their culture and profound respect for their heritage.

A perfect way to be indoctrinated to Thailand's art and culture is to watch Siam Niramit. With a stage recorded in the Guinness World Records as one of the highest in the world, realistic special effects, 180 performers, and 500 costumes, the musical is awesome. I caught myself gaping in awe as I watched the stage transform from one realistic setting to another—from the depths of the sea with performers impressively simulating sea creatures in a man-made river with an actor diving into it, from a simulated storm to a simulated sunlight that had crops sprouting on the set.

Another performance to behold was the Tiffany's Show, which has been around for over 17 years. Knowing that it was a transvestite cabaret show we still sat there asking ourselves "Man or woman?" With their graceful movements, various outfits, and looks that would have any red-blooded male drooling, it was definitely hard to tell.

They lip-synched to famous songs, danced, and made jokes that had everyone's eyes glued to the stage. After the performances, we gathered outside to pose with whomever we deemed was the prettiest performer.

Shop till you drop

Of course, a trip wouldn't be complete without hunting pasalubongs.

Besides the famous Chatuchak Weekend Market, the famous Floating Market is a must-visit place for tourists. You can pick out hand dishwares or souvenir trash besides the sellers are boats floating nearby or enjoy other activities such as a ride, fish, baby pool feeding, or water ball ride, among others.

If you'd rather do some mall hopping and grab a taste of good food, Terminal 21, which features some 600 shops; the Platinum Fashion Mall (like an indoor version of the Chatuchak Weekend Market), which has 2,500 shops; and the Pratunam Plaza, the mother of all IT shops, should tick your fancy.

As a thrifty shopping expert once inquired some good bargaining skills, here are some useful phrases for your next shopping spree: one—nueng (Tone mai?), pheng mang (sorry expression), phood Thai mai dai (I cannot speak Thai.), mai pen rai (never mind), sawasdee (Hello), kobkoon (Thank you), and la gon (Goodbye). Make sure to use kob (male) or kaa (female) after every greeting.

With your palms together and your head bowed, you're all set for your trip to Thailand.

For more information about Thailand, visit www.tourismthailand.org

THE ELEPHANT Village

MASSAGED by an elephant at Nong Nooch Garden & Resort

ELEPHANTS galore at Nong Nooch

Where to stay:

Set some relief after a day of shopping and sightseeing

Garden Cliff Resort & Spa, Pattaya

Where to feature: Breathtaking view of the secluded Cozycost Mimo Beach and accessibility point that overlooks the beach's golden sands and is directly accessible from the resort.

Grand Hyatt Erawan Hotel, Bangkok

Favorite feature: Spa Indulge—you don't have to leave the comfort of your room complete with spa facilities! to get your spa treatments, plus the spacious pool is a stone's throw away.

Tiaong has its come-ons

From page C1

would be true)."

Folk stories are also a good source, says Barlaan, and the book has its fair share. One legend, for example, is about the town's name, "Tiaong." According to the folktale, a wealthy, generous, religious lady named Inday Tiaong was well-loved by the village people (who called her "Ita," which means "aunt."

The prime would always wait for Ita's arrival in church before starting morning Mass; people would know she was near when they heard the sound of her bells "tiong." It is said that Inday Tiaong's name came from the combination of these two words, "Ita" and "tiong."

There is also the mystery of the *pakod*, or barbule, an unfinished tunnel dug during the Japanese occupation through a natural hill. Today it is covered in an overgrowth of vegetation, but stories say that hidden in it are treasures stored by General Yamashita and his soldiers; or that it was a dumpsite for people killed by the Japanese.

There are the old houses...the (fortunate) ancestral home of Senator Marcos Valdes Ilo., and the Casas-Cortes home on Alabarces corner Rizal.

There are interesting modern houses you can view, with permission from owners. Among these are Dr. Godofredo Bituin's Mediterranean-inspired "villa," and the "Filipino-made contemporary-style" home of former climber Danny Mea.

Some Ugu Bigyan's house and studio is open to the public; it is also his shop and showroom, where his artwork and paintings (his favorite subjects are pans, Plutonido describes the trek to the springs, however, as one that is not for "timid people," since one has to trek 10-15 minutes (at most, if one is unfortunate enough to encounter rain), and then cross a "swaying steel bridge."

"Our advice to extreme sports enthusiasts," artist Plutonido, "go for it."

Tiktik Lake is another spot for adventurers who would want to discover a thriving ecosystem of hogweek, silvers, monkeys and different species of birds.

"Tiaong: Coming Into Its Own" has photos by Donald Tajan and former Jeffrey Florendo. Design director is Trudy E. Bridges, who is Tiaonga.

Its many ways, the book is part of the legacy of the Lubid-Lubid Festival, which started the Lubid-Lubid Festival in 2002. It was a "blueprint" created for the town fiesta in honor of St. John the Baptist.

Aquino wanted a form to showcase the best of Tiaong through different activities. He used the term *lubid* to reinforce the values of strength and unity.

As more and more people discover the best of Tiaong through different activities. He used the term *lubid* to reinforce the values of strength and unity.

THE USAP Hanging Bridge, which crosses Mainit Spring

DANCERS in colorful costumes depict through a theatrical presentation the beginnings of Cagsawa village in Albay as part of the recent celebrations of the first Cagsawa Festival. The forerunner of present-day Daraga town, Cagsawa's origin is closely linked with the legend of Mayon, the world's most perfect cone volcano. Cagsawa was buried during Mayon Volcano's most destructive eruption on Feb. 1, 1814, killing some 1,000 persons. Its only remnants are the present ruined belfry and ruins of the village church which has become Albay's major tourist icon, is of the Cagsawa Church. Various cultural activities, entertainment shows, sports tournaments, fairs, and special events lined up this month-long Festival aimed at promoting Albay as a cultural tourism capital in the country.

When in Marina Bay Sands, look for Ella

But you need an appointment–she's one busy, high-achieving Filipina

EVEN if you venture far off the edge, you won't fall off the building.

OPEN lounge surrounding the top of the hotel; Judy Ella giving us the VIP tour on the public observation deck

By Rashmi Jain
Correspondent

IT MAKES us proud when a fellow countryman makes a mark on foreign soil. I know we can come so many at this point, but this time I will introduce to you someone who, from my point of view, has so much power in which she was working. We became friends instantly because we shared so many similar stories and experiences; we kept in touch even when I was back in Manila.

Access card

I lost contact with her eventually because I changed phones, and so did she. But thanks God for social networks, we soon reconnected again. When I found myself some R&R time in Singapore, I posted a tweet that I was in the country. Instantly, my phone rang with a local number I did not recognise.

It was Ella. She wanted me to visit her at the Marina Bay Sands. I asked what was she doing over there since I hardly remembered she was with another hotel on Orchard Road. She simply asked me to get my butt to Marina Bay Sands the next day so she could tell me the juicy details.

I entered at the Marina Bay Sands and was greeted by the sight of the enormous atrium lobby and three glass lanterns that adorned the interior. The lobby was packed like the Grand Central Station. Ella appeared out of nowhere, explaining that it was the Chinese New Year, holiday the month of turnaround. She pulled out an access card that looked like any other ordinary room card, but somehow I felt it bore with power.

"Follow me," she said. A private elevator opened for us. "Only special VIPs are this to avoid the crowd," she told me. Super thing I know, I was on the rooftop of Tower One, and she was offering me coffee or champagne.

"At 10 in the morning?" "Why not?" she replied with a grin. She then ushered me through the sky on 57 restaurants, past another door which revealed a breathtaking view of the bay. What a way to start the morning—champagne, the view and the life of the rich and famous.

That's just a glimpse of Ella's glitzy life in Singapore. It did not come easy since she had totally left behind in Manila (she's originally from Bacolod). Ella has made it to where only a few Filipinos have lived. Recently, she was awarded the Excellence Service Award 2011 by the Singapore Hotel Association, a highly prestigious award that recognizes individuals who have delivered outstanding service in the hospitality industry.

And if I'm not mistaken, this is the third time she has received this award since 2005!

Genuinely proud

Ella continued to give us the VIP tour of Marina Bay Sands. She didn't treat us like any other guide, but more like a friend reverently sharing the things she knows. You could see it in her eyes and hear it in her voice. She was genuinely proud of the things she was showing us.

THE HELIX bridge, another addition the ever changing landscape of the bay area, shows the Ilog Louis Vitton island Modern in Asia

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A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

Where to Stop Where to Go

East meets West: Chili crabs meets foie gras

MAKATI Shangri-La, Manila brings distinct flavors from across the globe with two guest chefs this March.

From the east comes Singapore-an Cuisine by Chef Sanimol Chan of Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort, Singapore at Circles Event Café with a spread of authentic Singaporean favorites for a gastronomic tour from March 7 to 16. Guests may also indulge in a culinary treat with a cooking class on his creations led by Chef Chan on March 10 at Circles Event Café.

With 20 years of culinary experience, Chef Chan is a familiar face in Singapore's elite culinary circle. His signature dishes have been recognized as among the best. The chef's version of the Singapore chili crab has been cited as one of the things patrons dining on-one's top dishes in prominent dining websites.

Chef Chan's chat lovey treat; a dish consisting of stir-fried flat noodles with chicken, prawns, scallops, egg and fish, but tied to his inventive twist is prepared in one-of-a-kind chef at the 14th Annual World of Flavor Conference by The Culinary Institute of America in California last year.

Guests may also enjoy Chef Chan's version of the renowned crustal Singapore's Hainanese chicken, seasoned satay with peanut sauce, laksa, beef rendang, and squid sambal, which are only some of the delectable dishes for guests to enjoy.

Guests may also get a chance to win a trip for two to Singapore care of Cebu Pacific air when dining at Circles Event Café from March 7 to 16. The Philippines' largest national flag carrier, Cebu Pacific flies to Singapore from Manila up to five times daily from 1:05a daily, and from Clark daily.

With travel boosted by Cebu Pacific's lowest year-round fares as low as P1,499, Singapore is the airline's most popular 600,000 destination. For bookings, go to www.cebupacificair.com or call 7020.888. The latest seat sales can also be found on Cebu Pacific's official Facebook and Twitter pages.

From the Rasa cuisine French cuisine, by Chef Michael Ellis, master in foie gras. Chef Petit visits Manila to share an exclusive foie gras menu available from March 12 to 15 at Makati Shangri-La's Red.

Chef Petit's expertise in French cuisine was developed by having been a part of the culinary teams of various Michelin star restaurants in Paris, most notable of which would be his role as Chef de partie in some of the 3 star Michelin restaurants of world-renowned Joel Robuchon, recognized as the world's classic dessert chef.

In the last decade, Chef Michael Petit has spent his time with Fraser Foodard, the leading foie gras producer in France. Chef Petit works with the group in his/her developing and improving the quality of their foie gras, and ultimately providing the market with an unrivalled experience with every bacon bite. Chef Petit shares his passion for foodand foie gras as he toasts the world preparing delectable menus.

This month, he is featured at Makati Shangri-La's Red. Guests may indulge in a six- or nine-course degustation menu with wine pairing, available for lunch and dinner.

To make the evening amazing his dishes are into: linguini de foie gras de canards au cuit et ses toasts aux cèpes, poire de Anjou, tatanes confites et basilic et duck foie gras "au cuit" with morels, poppies, figs, tomato confit and basil, eucalyptus foie gras de canard poêlé, mangues et réduction de vinaigre balsamique et pan-seared duck liver with mango and balsamic reduction, bullotine en choux de filet de canard et ses foie gras, jus au miel de canard et bullotine of duck breast filet and foie gras in duck essence.

Foie gras lovers can be part of Chef Michael Petit's cooking class on March 10, followed by a three-course set lunch.

For inquiries and reservations, please call the Restaurant Reservations and Information Centre at 840-8484 or e-mail ric.cbn@shangri-la.com.

Li Li enhances traditional favour of gamaya

THERE'S NO DOUBT March and April, Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila's award-winning Cantonese restaurant, Li Li, offers the nutritious and delicate flavours of gamaya. Savor this traditional delicacy, made more delicious with innovative cooking techniques guaranteed to surprise and delight even the most discerning palate. Chef Andy Chan enhances the well-loved, mild flavor of this gamaya with fresh, unique ingredients. Highly recommended entrées include Pork Hock Gamaya with Chilli Jam Sauce in Coconut Sauce, Wok-Baked Live Gamaya in Chinese Spice, Deep-Fried Live Gamaya with Sesame-Style Wasabi Salad and Braised Live Gamaya with Chilli "Sichuan" Pepper Sauce – just a few of Chef Andy's personal favorites. Excite your taste buds and indulge in these bold gamaya specialties for an exceptional dining experience. For inquiries and more information, please call the Food and Beverage

Reservations Centre on 247-3000 or 245-1234 ext. 7201. Alternatively, e-mail cafli.mnl@hyatt.com.

New lunch specials at the Prince Albert Rotisserie

SOMETHING new is cooking at InterContinental Manila's Prince Albert Rotisserie. Executive Chef Bernd Stelmer is introducing new set menus for lunch at the tempting prices of P850 net per person for an appetizer and a main course and P1,200 net per person for an appetizer, main course and dessert. A choice of three is available for each course. Menus will vary weekly. Among the chef's recommendations are the Filet of Pork Stopper with Grilled Artichoke Hearts, Olives, Roasted Cherry Tomatoes, Caramelized Shallots and Lemon-infused Olive Oil; Herb Cream Dinner-filled Breast of Chicken on Fava Bean Risotto with Asparagus Spears and Roast Provencio Country Beef, Leek, and Carrot Iron Roulade with Forest Ragout and Gratinated Potatoes. Spiced Lacto Mask with Grilled Pita Bread, Hummus and Tzatziki and Chocolate Chip Tiramisu with Almond Tuile. The Prince Albert

Rotisserie is open for lunch from Monday to Friday 12 noon to 2:30 p.m., and for dinner from Monday to Saturday 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. For reservations, call 702-1000.

Ready for occupancy

GOOD news! The BSA Twin Towers is now finished and is ready for occupancy. Turnover of units is currently on going. This premier residential commercial condominium is located right in the heart of Ortigas. It is recognized as the tallest twin towers in the Philippines as declared by the Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH). BSA Twin Towers is a haven situated in the metro. Its contemporary style is suitable for working men and women. The soothing ambiance of the units promises to take one's physique after a long day at the office. The excellent location of the condominium hotel is its strength. Various corporate establishments such as the Business Development Bank of the Philippines only 1 this walks away. Public transportation terminals are at an edible reach. Visit model units now. Only a few units are left available. For inquiries, contact 638.2268 and 632.4040.

Sizzling summer promo

BEST Western Hotel La Corona Manila comes up with a new set meal promo that will send your taste buds to the summer spirit. For the months of March to May, enjoy an exquisite set meal of your choice for only P340. The meal includes your choice of either House Salad or Cream of Asparagus soup, a free selection of entrée, choose from Grilled Rib-eye Steak, Herb-and-Butter-Crusted Fish, Grilled Cream Dory with lemon-caper sauce, Chicken Barbecue or Sizzling Roman-style braised beef stew served on a sizzling plate; your choice of strawberry or vanilla sundae for dessert and mango and orange juice for drinks. If your mouth hasn't watered yet with this selection, Cafe Arguzia also offers smoothies and shakes. Cool off that summer heat with a selection of ripe mango, green mango, pineapple and watermelon shakes for just P90. Dish out with your friends and enjoy a glass of either mango float chocolate or ripe mango and papaya smoothies for only P98. Cafe Arguzia is located in Best Western Hotel La Corona Manila. For easier access, go to Google maps. Or check out www.facebook.com/bestwesternhotellacoronamanila for more information, or call 524-2011 to 20, or visit 1160 M.H. Del Pilar cor. Arguzia St., Ermita Manila.

Sunset pool party

On Friday, March 16, party like you've never partied before at the poolside of Intercontinental Manila. Entrance fee is at P800 net per person inclusive of one alcoholic drink, free use of the swimming pool from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., and free entrance to the adjacent ICON Store starting 11 p.m. Barbecue-grilled food can be ordered a la carte as well as alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. Fire dancers, a DJ booth playing electronic mix and lounge/beach music and a famous booth are all set there to be loved by all. Take advantage of the Tribal Pool Party Room Package. Valid from March 16 to 18, pay only P6,888 net for an overnight stay in a Deluxe Room with buffet breakfast for two at Café Jeepney and entrance for two to the party inclusive of the above-mentioned privileges. For more information or to make a reservation, please call 793 7000. Tribal is a collaboration of Ibet Ibahasan Liquid Productions and the hotel.

Summertime, fun time

SHYDR a cool summertime bar, and experience a perfect summer getaway with Century Thick Shyrl's mouth-watering treats and thirst-quenching delights.

At the Palm Grove, enjoy a relaxing escape at the only campus-type air-conditioned pools in Manila with family, relatives and friends from March 24 to May 31.

From 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., partake of the Poolside snack bar entrees with its fun snacks like spaghetti with meat sauce and one piece fried chicken for only P215 net, chicken strips with dip and fish fingers with tartare sauce at P125 net, and plain or flavored French fries or popcorn at P90 net. Those sit-down meals can be fully enjoyed with buy-one-take-one beverages: soft drink or iced tea at P60 net, local beer at P100 net, and bottled water at P125 net.

Quick snacks are also fun while enjoying the sun. Try Nothing-to-rush for only P90 net or the squid, fish or shrimp balls selection at P80 net per six pieces per order. To end you down, enjoy fresh juice bar's thirst quenchers: orange and ripe mango at P160 net per order, and green mango, watermelon, melon, buko, pineapple, carrots, papaya, banana and cucumber for P140 net.

Relieve or alter a stress or mask under the sun, choose cute mini and mini-up orchids Bingo to go with their greens at the salad bar. For one fixed salad, P95 net; two fixed salad, P130 net; and three fixed salad, P195 net.

Strolling beats the summer heat like the old-fashioned way. At the hide-hide bar, guests can maximize this summer sweet season by choosing condiments from among the following: sweet potato, banana, taro, beans, cornflakes, corn kernels, gulaman, sago, ube, leche flan, halo-halo ube and langka, and top off their favorite Dilgate dessert for up words of P80 net per order. Just add P50 net for a scoop of ice cream on top.

In the same way, you can spoil your sweet tooth over at the authentic ice cream cart, where plain and sugar cream cones can be piled up with scoops of sweet pick of flavors of all time. Fancy favorites like chocolate, mango and cheese at P60 net per scoop. Extra serving is only P 20 net per scoop.

Century Thrills, recognized by the Black Guide as one of Asia's finest restaurants of 2012, offers a tasteful Lobster and Seafood Buffet set with scoops of sweet pick of flavors of all time!

Renew body and spirit at Gourmet Farms

ASA INGNOGNAY, Feb. 22, mustard therapeutic of the Garden Mansion. 60 days and nights of thoughtful, somber preparation for the most glorious feast in Christianity. Easter.

Gourmet Farms invites you to come to Silang (Km. 32 Aguinaldo Highway, Cavite, and take a six-week contemplation with through the fast.

And since Lent is really a time to cast our renewal only and be good to the body as well and consider physical renewal with the form's fresh and organic salad vegetables? Maybe now is the time to rotate old eating habits and think more of pure wholesome and health.

Choose from a vast selection of fresh leaf salads and dressings, available anytime at the Country Store, and soon on the Slow and Farms restaurant.

Kalilangan: GenSan's Festival of Culture

It was an explosion of colors and rhythm as cast, tourists City showcased its artistic side and celebrated the most anticipated Kalilangan Festival as part of its 73rd founding day.

One best time the street event "Sulilang," the last literally means "celebration" in the Maguindanaon dialect. The month-long festivity kicked off on Feb. 13 with sports tournaments, coffee Filipino games, cultural shows, dancesport, gallop, and special rites last month.

According to Mayor Darlene Antonino-Custodio, this year's festivity, with the theme "Cooperation in Divergence Developing Heritage, Realizing Solutions," highlighted unity and diversity among peoples of various faiths and cultures as gen-cultic have made General Santos their home.

Kalilangan is a fun-filled highlight of the three Tourism Event Brothers and Arts Category City Level 1 of the Association of Tourism Officers in the Philippines in 2009 and 2011.

Festivities shoot to a close on Feb. 27 with the Kalilangan "Parade ng Lahi" and the Kalilangan Festival Dance Night to mark the founding of the city as the Commonwealth of Dadiangas.

Formerly known as Dadiangas, town of Cotabato, the city was established in 1939 by Gen. Paulino Santos of Ilocos, native nationalist hero of the National Land Settlement Administration, upon the instruction of President Manuel Quezon. It was converted into a city on Sept. 5, 1968, and was named after Santos.

Custodio pointed out that aside from being the country's tuna capital, the city is also being developed as an ecotourism spot because of its natural resources, such as the Mabila Hanis Tourism Park, which is being developed to be one of the country's best ecoparks.

The park covers a hectare of land in the city. Mr. Mabalon, and the largest Ilig, is a splendid ecotourist culture canoeing, canyoneering, bird watching, and other close-to-nature ecotourism activities. It has a 600- and 300-m

GOURMET Farms

cabins, as well as a table on.

The city's also known of historic spots such as the World War II Japanese bunkers, San Pedro Cemetery Museum, and the Mindanao State University Museum.

For details on Kalilangan Festival, add the local Facebook Kalilangan Festival and Magpadeng hashtag or log on to www.gensantos.com.

Stay at Tune Hotels for more of what matters

Staying true to its promise of "Great Value, Great Savings," Tune Hotels guarantees every guest not just a pleasant accommodation at an affordable price, but full experience of this destination. Thanks to the extra resources offered by Tune Hotels' value concept, where guests only pay for the amenities that they need, whether it's more resources to explore the sights or more memories to be treasured, Tune Hotels will make you feel that you spend your resources on things that matter to you.

One of six Tune Hotels that will soon be taking up residence in the Philippines is Tune Hotels Cebu, which will be conveniently located in the up-town commercial and business district and situated directly across the famous Ayala Center. Displaying Tune Hotels Cebu, guests can spend their resources on exploring the many quality sights, which include the local tourist landmarks like Magellan's Cross, Basilica del Santo Niño, San Pedro and Casa Gorordo Museum. Should guests feel the want to venture further, the private-vehicle-use functions of Mactan International are 40 minutes away by land.

For guests who like to spend their downtime playing a round of golf on a world-class resort or exploring the local nightlife, Tune Hotels Angeles City, which will be opening its doors within the first half of this year, will be offering the perfect solution. With high-quality tuning multi-room and outdoor-inside 250-thread count sheets, guests are assured a good nights' sleep after a long day of exploration. Those in search of more adventure in the area can also rent a motorbike and guests will surely feel refreshed and ready to face another day of fun and good times.

For guests who intend to stay in Manila and plan to get to know the vibrant and bustling city more, Tune Hotels Manila, which is set to open before mid-year, will be perfect for those who do not want to be in what Manila has to offer. Perfectly located on Roxas Boulevard, one can find guests less than 10 minutes away from which are Rizal Park, Intramuros, National Museum and Manila Cathedral.

Log on to www.tunehotels.com

When in Marina ...

From page D1

From our outdoor lounge, the position of the enormous Louis Vuitton flagship store, the new ArtScience Museum, and the all the neighboring landmarks. The Marina Bay Sands is really a new landmark, and mixed along with the Merlions is all the country's tourist programs.

We crossed the three towers of the hotel via the Sands Skypark, treated up on the rooftop, and saw the public's spectacular dark was elevated. Only guests of the hotel have access to the pool. The security is so strict that despite Ella being such as, we were checked. Like that in a hotel. Makes me feel safe.

The first took us to the Banyan Tree Spa, where the cheapest treatment cost runs SGD$80. It's supposed to be the best spa in the world. Using the private elevators again, the guests access to a private part of the casino to dinner off the more expensive. Seasoned chandelier in the world! And this area above the casino floor. I doubt if the people gambling even notices that, unless it came crashed on them.

We left the casino and found the dinners hosting the musical "Wicked." I am definitely coming back to watch this. Then, onwards to a mall directly connected to the hotel and the casino. Yah, those self-contained mall self-sufficient. You don't even have to leave the hotel for anything. The mall is so amazing, housing almost everything you want...if you're a shopaholic like me.

Connections

And did I mention food? Like his connection to the best restaurants in the place. He knows people in the right places if you need get a table in your to some restaurant. I must remember to use when I see him again. Not just food, but also parties and entertainment. Imagine who to get the list of these. I wonder where the pole of the celebs when the cam are left food. Maybe he has a list somewhere, maybe it's all the wedding there. Maybe he has an inside to money. But let me tell you, this is OK.

Ella is so glad that you went to dance and boost about. That's why I never hesitate to introduce her to my friends. Now she rubs elbows and ties friends with Bobby Caldwell, KC Concepcion, Kuh Ledesma and Mona Rosa, just to name a few. And yes, she has attended international parties, bands of stars and celebrities, among them Katy Perry, Lady Gaga and Justin Bieber.

So, will Ella back for her in Marina Bay Sands and ask for a spread free? You can try. With the amount of work and the responsibilities she has, I think we all need to make an appointment and time. But of the end of the day, I am proud that I met Ella, and because of the connections and the privileges that come with her work, but because she makes me proud of her—a fellow Filipina whose great success shows that, with hard work, achieving one's dreams is possible.

Visit myweekendgetaway.com/2012/03/10/connections/ and myweekendgetaway.com/2012/03/10/when-in-marina/ for more photos.

Editor Nestor U. Torre • Assistant Editor Rita P. Avila

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Lily Collins denies rivalry with Kristen Stewart

COLLINS: Finding relationship with her dad.

LOS ANGELES—Lily Collins dismissed talk of rivalry between her and Kristen Stewart in an recent interview. The two actresses star in competing "Snow White" movies, with Lily's "Mirror, Mirror" being released earlier this month.

Tarsem Singh directs "Mirror, Mirror" with Armie Hammer, Julia Roberts, Nathan Lane and Sean Bean. In our conversation, the daughter of singer Phil Collins talked about Julia, her thoughts about a singing career and growing up with a famous last name.

Did you have a chance to talk to Kristen Stewart about her rather-furor White movie?

Yes. We're friends. It's funny because in the beginning, everyone was saying, "They're rivals. They're competing." I was laughed at that. We were like, "This is so funny that we're considered rivals, whereas the two movies couldn't be more different. The advertising campaigns prove that the films are in different—the tone, characters, and even the costumes. I'm so excited to see her version, to see how they've played with it. I've met with that director (Rupert Sanders). I know that he has a totally different vision. I think Kristen's the same way. We both pretty much laughed at all the rumors.

Leading a privileged life probably presented its own set of challenges to you.

I realize that when I walk into a place, some people have a preconceived notion of this young girl who looks even younger than her actual age. I will be 23 soon, but sometimes people ask, 'Are you 14 or 15?' It's just making sure that I'm able to walk in a room, and people see one thing. And, when I leave, they think differently. Seeing people think that you have an upper hand almost gives you a harder time trying to overcome that.

Talk about working with the "Evil Queen," Julia Roberts.

What I love most about Julia is that she's first and foremost a mother, on and off the set. She kinda nurses on the set all the time. She was able to maximize that sense of being a mother, as well as the evil queen—which ge-

GO TO P2

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ROA, JEDESHA AND SEGUERRA. Beam "TVM's" woman power.

Boots, Kuh, Aiza join Monique in special 'TVM' show

By Rita P. Avila

WILSON. "We have to keep these stories alive."

THIRTY ITS kali-blazing success, Eric Borden's Obie award-winning play "The Vagina Monologues" remains a polarizing piece—even for top female artists and women leaders. We have seen alongside Boots Anson-Roa in a stage production ("Ms. Boots Ahead") and on video, Judy Ann Santos ("Usapang Babae")—but, we know that asking her to do a monologue for "V-Day Manila 2012," which goes onstage at Music Museum on March 31 (call 891-9999, 725-8833 or 896-8005), would be a dicey proposition.

Out of the box

After all, despite the relevant themes it honestly tackles, the play can be slim be dramatically staged for any "wholesome" actress to essay. When we e-mailed the monologue on childbirth to Tita Boots, however, she immediately agreed, because while it's true that "TVM" is "out of the box for me, it's always been on my bucket list."

The "relatively adventurous" actress was excited after she read "I Was There In The Room" (performed previously by Jane Fonda, among others). "I cried after I read it for the first time, because it's heartfelt, yet it resonates with pathos. I can relate to it, because I'm a mother. Even my two daughters are mothers now!"

Rich Lederman's participation is another pleasant surprise: "Rich is a close friend whom I've known even before I did Miss Saigon," Monique Wilson, who's co-directing the show with us, insisted. "I was thrilled when she finally said yes, because she has also been offering changes in her field. Plus, there's something special about sharing these monologues with your closest friends."

Another V-Day newbie is Aiza Seguerra. Monique noted, "We've seen her grow up and evolve as a role model for young women. Her presence in the show is important, because it will no doubt inspire other girls to come into their power and not be afraid of it."

"The cast includes a lot of formidable women who are doing V-Day for the first time. It's going to be amazing when we all come together onstage! This year, we're doing the show for the benefit of our wonder women, who have yet to get an apology or reparations from the Japanese government—so, it's our obligation to keep their stories alive."

For our part, we have devoted many "TVM" actresses here and in other parts of Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan) —but, the show continues to evolve as, especially with the outstanding women who are joining the V-Day bay this year.

Exciting cast

Aside from Wilson, Roa, Seguerra and Inguzzio, the evening cast also includes (in no particular order) Tuesi Monacil, Pinky Amador, Joy Rivera, Jenni Simmons, Madeleine Nicolas, Sheila Francisco, Rosalyn Sytiz,

BOOTS P2

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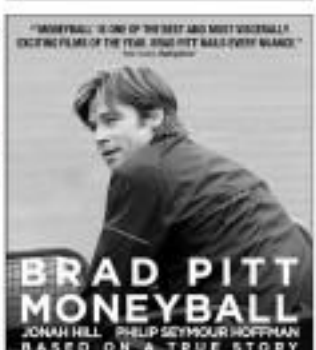

BRAD PITT
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SONY

When . . .

Front page ▶

Manny's change of heart truly significant and potentially influential, if he held on to it, he could encourage people to similarly reconsider their own views regarding the latter, and that would be all to the good.

Of course, it would also call into question his own continued participation in the sport that has made him world-famous, as well as a dollar millionaire many times over—but, that's another story.

—Still, it looks like that story will have to wait some more to be told, because recent developments indicate that Manny's "right-turned" retirement from boxing has been put on hold for the nonce. In fact, he's currently preparing for his next title fight.

—What about after that? Well, just last week, he lackeyed that one of his aces was urging him to push through with his "fight of the century" against the jaw-talking Floyd Mayweather, to "teach him a lesson." So, that grudge encounter could transpire (no further than Manny hangs up his gloves and lims up to his newfound conviction).

Thus, there's Dreyfuss's political nexus to consider—or reconfigure. All along, we thought that his other career, as a self-styled shoo biz star, was launched for the long-range purpose of making him popular enough for people to take him seriously as a presidential or vice-presidential bet, so early as in the near national polls.

Image-enhancer

In fact, his formally being hailed on his TV guest-shot as "Manny" is the pugnate's graceful concession and beatification can be seen as a key image-enhancer in this regard.

Could his recent "religious" change of heart be the next big step in this long-range direction? And, if so, will Manny's ascendancy and even vice-presidential ambitions be superseded by a presidential one? (Gulp.)

—After all, there was a time when several big religious leaders with a national following on TV were being moved to ponder presidential bets due to their vote-getting potential.

If and when Manny's different career thrusts "rub in" and converge—as losing legend, show biz star, political leader and newly-minted religious avatar, all rolled in to one—the ultimate Champion of the Nation shall have been proclaimed! (Gulp again.)

Boots . . .

Front page ▶

Gina Wilson, Mae Shane, Leah Navarro, Cecilia Alinsob Orosa, Dolly Anne Carvajal, Cynthia Alexander, Krupy Benevedes, Christine Cudiot, Minko Rampi, Christine Escudero, Angelo Padilla, Anna Leah Sandoz, Daniel de Jesus, Lisa Maza, Edna Aquino, April Grimm, Nikki Vernon, Denise Bermejo, Nimfas San Pedro, Dr. Marilyn Suarez, and Irving Lim.

Marjun further emerged, "We have to continue giving women a voice, to break the culture of silence and shame surrounding rape and abuse. We started doing the play over 12 years ago—but, while it's true that the occurrence has had incredible moments of triumph, violence toward women has not ended. There's still so much to be done!"

Lily . . .

Front page ▶

polite opposition. She plays evil to a new shade as we canoeing and interacting in a high school way. Like in high school, the mean girls go, "I love your sweater. It's just so cute!" They're actually saying, "It's horrible. I don't know why you bought it."

Julia doesn't need to yell to be evil. It's all in her demeanor and her eyes. But, the second they yell cut, she's back to being so cool, nice and genuine. She's pulling your hair and tapping your cheek concurrently—but, the second it's over, she caresses your cheek like my mom does.

What was that like, to have your hair pulled?

They used the take where she actually ended up pulling some hair out, because my hair got caught in my dress. I was climbs farther away from her than I had been in the rehearsal. So, when she went to pull my hair, she had to pull from farther away and faster—and part of my hair came out. They always use the "mistake takes," so I thought, "They're going to use this take!" I kept my composure, but when they yelled, "Cut!" I was like, "Dude!" Julia went, "Oh-my-God, are you OK?" They actually did use that take.

Idea

How did Tuason get you to sing in the movie? And, how did your dad react to your singing?

Tuason brought up the idea originally. I said, "Sure, why not?" I wasn't expecting him to actually follow through with it. We were in the middle of filming when Tuason goes, "We're doing the song and dance number." I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "You're going to go in the studio and do a song."

I had no idea this was going to be a big Hollywood number. I've never sung a Hollywood song before. So, I went into the sound studio, and I sang my heart out! I asked to go back a second time to try new things, to

Lily Collins . . .

From page E1

put more of an Indian spin on my voice, because I really wanted to go for it. It was so much fun.

When I played the song to my dad, he couldn't believe that it was me. My little brothers were also like, "That's not you! You don't sound like yourself. We've never heard you sing like that." I'm really proud of the song.

Singing career

Are you considering a singing career, too?

I wouldn't say that I'm going to leave an album. Never say never... but, my focus is definitely acting. But, as in this movie, if doesn't awaken side that requires singing, like a musical, I'm definitely for it.

How is the chemistry between you and your dad, since he lives for a year from you?

I was living in LA when he was in England and now, he's living in Switzerland. I've grown up with the distance thing. My heart is bit. So he grows older, my child has evolving relationships with his parents. They're older versions of you, so you understand them more. I see myself in them. My dad and I are really close.

E-mail *rmopalas_33882@yahoo.com*. Follow http://twitter.com/inquirerdotnet.

MOVIE TIME

GREENBELT 5

1: ONE FOR THE MONEY
2: UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
3: JOHN CARTER (3D)
4: MY WEEK WITH MARILYN
5: DEVIL INSIDE
6: JOHN CARTER (3D)
7: EXTREMELY LOUD ... / THIS MEANS WAR

GREENBELT 1

1: UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
2: JOHN CARTER

GREENBELT 3

1: JOHN CARTER
2: JOHN CARTER (3D)
3: DEVIL INSIDE
4: MONEY BALL
5: THIS MEANS WAR

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1: JOHN CARTER
2: JOHN CARTER (3D)
3: MONEY BALL
4: THIS MEANS WAR
5: DEVIL INSIDE

ARNA CENTER DBE

1: MONEY BALL
2: JOHN CARTER
3: JOHN CARTER (3D)
4: UNOFFICIALLY YOURS / THIS MEANS WAR

MARQUEE

1: JOHN CARTER
2: JOHN CARTER (3D)
3: MONEY BALL
4: DEVIL INSIDE

MARKET! MARKET!

1: JOHN CARTER (3D)
2: GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE
3: DEVIL INSIDE
4: MONEY BALL
5: JOHN CARTER
6: UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
7: THIS MEANS WAR

TRINOMA

1: EXTREMELY LOUD ... / THIS MEANS WAR
2: MY WEEK WITH MARILYN
3: JOHN CARTER (3D)
4: MONEY BALL
5: DEVIL INSIDE
6: UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
7: JOHN CARTER

ABREEZA

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4: THE DESCENDANTS

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When will Pacquiao's different career thrusts 'volt in'?

By Steve U. Tare

ONLY A COUPLE of years ago, talk about boxing champ, Manny Pacquiao, revolved, not just on his exploits in the ring, but also on his renowned romantic escapades.

But, starting this year, after a change of all of a sudden, breaking news that if Chel Mosato has turned a new leaf—and, with what that and Rosalinda Nin only has he stopped clubbing with obliging damsels, but he's even started spouting pious biblical quotations. In fact, he's being touted as an official biblical exegesis or "ambassador"!

Most potentially game-changing of all is the champ's declaration that boxing is against the teachings of the Church, because it flouts God's word against violence.

Influential

Since we explore the sport of boxing for the same reason, we found

PACQUIAO. Change of heart.

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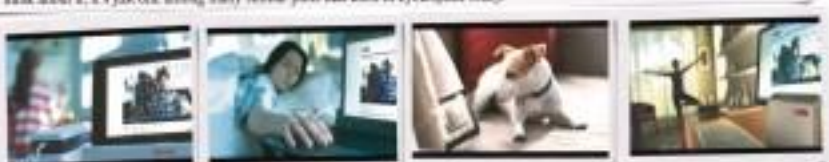
From homemaker to Hitmaker

At more than 1 Million Hits, Derek S. Lorenzo is now an internet sensation with PLDT myDSL.

Manny Berres and Derek watch Anna Banana rack up the hits

If you were Anna Banana, wouldn't you love him a bunch?

With over 1 Million views on YouTube under his belt, the distinction of becoming a trending topic on Twitter, and taking the #2 spot among the Philippines' Top 10 most viewed YouTube videos, Derek S. Lorenzo's star is definitely on the rise. It's no surprise since Anna Banana is becoming everyone's LSS, sung by students in school and on the streets because of its sheer popularity. How the endearing 13-year-old shot to fame with the help of his beloved Manny Berres makes for one inspiring story indeed. But if you stop to think about it, it's just one among many similar plots that exist in cyberspace today.



Who doesn't know of any mom who is willing to do anything to help her child succeed?

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SATURDAY Special

DUJARDIN AND GOODMAN Winning references

Oscar-winning homage to cinema dramatizes changing of the guard

By Rito P. Asido

WHEN "THE Artist" won Best Picture at the Oscars last month, it became only the second silent film to earn the Academy's top plum—after William Wellman's 1927 western, "Wings," even the coveted prize during the first Academy Awards in 1929!

But, the award-giving season that culminated at last month's Oscars was made even more interesting by the tense between provocative movies that reflect the prevailing doom and gloom on politics and global economy on one hand and feel-good flicks that allow viewers to temporarily forget their worries, on the other.

Mind-benders

The first group was represented by Stephen Daldry's Oscar-nominated "9/11 drama, "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close" and a mix of apocalyptic mind-benders last year: Tilda's "Melancholia," Jeff Nichols' "Take Shelter" and Mike Cahill's "Another Earth."

"Melancholia" examines the relationship of two sisters (Kirsten Dunst and Charlotte Gainsbourg) as a mysterious planet threatens to collide with ours. Jeff Nichol's "Take Shelter" has Michael Shannon building an underground shelter after his disturbing visions about the Armageddon haunt him—is his mind just playing tricks on him, or has he gone nuts?

And, in "Another Earth," an astronomy student discovers a duplicate planet Earth in the outer cosmos, a noteworthy student (Rich Mackay) causes strife with the grief-stricken musician (William Mapother) whose wife and son are killed in a drunk-driving tragedy (the car, incidentally, is Toyota).

On the other hand, the "escapist" other end of the cinematic spectrum: visibles Deardorff's self-evident feast this year, led by top Academy award winners, Michel Hazanavicius' "The Artist" and Martin Scorsese's "Hugo," as well as the Meryl Streep-Jim Broadbent-Olivia Wilde, "My Week With Marilyn"—all "love letters" to cinema.

Coming into the Oscar season, "The Artist" had "handicaps" that could have affected its prospects on the film—it's a silent film, and it's in black-and-white! But, even cute, the logline and color, the production has a lot of things going for it—it's fast-paced, funny, tragic, heartbreaking and heart-warming at the same time, and to conclude with a scene that will take your breath away!

Moreover, you'll love its refreshing references to Douglas Fairbanks, Greta Garbo, Mary Pickford, Clark Gable, Alfred Hitchcock, Orson Welles and Artie Gilbert—who was one of the notable casualties of Hollywood's transition to sound!

Complication

The movie follows the story of silent-screen hero, George Valentin (Jean Dujardin) who's in literally bumps into—and bonds with—lovely bit player, Peppy Miller (Bérénice Bejo), in Hollywood-land, circa 1927. Spoiler Pt. but doesn't see "triple" complication. Jealousy—George is married to Doris (Penelope Ann Miller), albeit unhappily!

The arrival of the "talkies" and the stock market crash of 1929 forge a changing of the economic guard that turns the actor's life upside down—especially after he scoffs at the new technology forced on him by movie mogul, Al Zimmer (John Goodman), like sooooo. "I'm the one people come to, we—they never needed to hear me!" And, as George's star begins to dim, Peppy's turns her into America's Sweetheart!

In the film as flashy and "noisy" as it couldn't! Hardly. Note the production's attention to detail as it transports viewers back to the roaring '20s and the gloomy '30s. The dizzying sequence shots proves that shooting first film was no walk in the park for Dujardin and Bejo, who rehearsed the elaborate finale shower every day in the same studio where Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds perfected their inspirational scene for "Singin' in the Rain"—for five months! If that isn't hard, dedicated work, we don't know what is!

What's in a movie title?

By Nestor U. Torre

"MY CACTUS HEART" is "Sinulag" better?

OUR UNTITLED issue on signs and symptoms of "colonial mentality" in Philippine entertainment and the arts takes us to the grievance monster in which we think up titles for our movies. Recently, three popular films were given English titles: "My Cactus Heart," "Unaffected by Yesan" and "Forever (Forever) Benjamin."

The titles using "My" in a title has become a local sidebar quirk, with "Oh, My God" setting the pace, "My Amnesia Girl" following suit, along with "My Big Love" and "My Only Love"—and "My Kontrabida Girl" still waiting in the wings!

Quite noteworthy, our vulnerability to such claims that the use of English titles for Filipino movies has been part of local tradition since "private" days. We reckon that some 20 to 30 percent of local movie titles aren't local, but for the life of us cannot like why we have ushered in our local title envoy of likability-ness!

Reason

The reason to all too obvious: Since "Sinulag" means "better" to those users, the use of an English title suggests that the film in question is more trendy, sophisticated, stylish, stylish, cool and generally better than if the same film had been titled in the vernacular.

For instance, a romantic drama that could very well have been titled "Mahal Pa Rin Kaya Ito," (or, possibly sounds "better" to pronounce or consider "apparitional" in English—"Do I Love You," "My Pledge of Love," "True Love," "I Adore You," "Love Is For The Two Of Us," "From the Bottom of My Heart," "You Are My Love," "I Love You, Honey" (script local movie titles, would you believe?)!

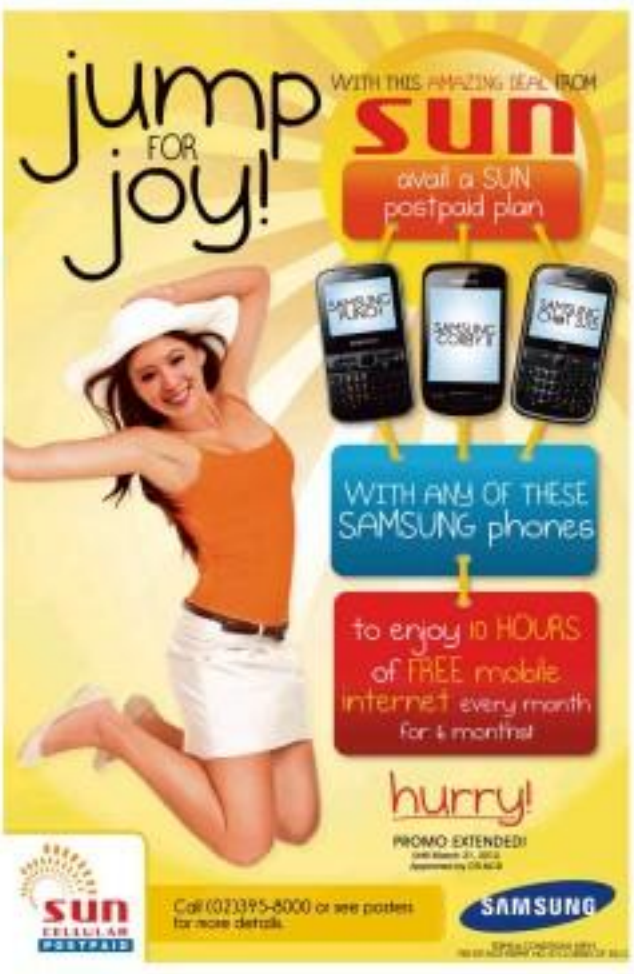
Action flicks

Local action flicks have been similarly ported to English-and English-ized titles, to make them sound like action-packed-to-the-rafters Hollywood blockbusters—"The Hotliner," "Mayhem Convict," "Jumbo Jet," "Kidnappers," "Bounce," "Comfort Sniper," "Contraband," "The Sky Divers," "Dead-ly Fighters," "Spy Hard," "Counter Attack," "Shotgun Kid," "Serious Kid," "Manhunt" and "Cyrus"—!

And, local movie producers seem to believe that, if they give their sex flicks English titles, they will seduce viewers with the promise of extra, "unprofaned" studies, as with: "The Climax of Love," "The Strip Teases," "Devil Woman," "Three Nights of Love," "Love for Hire," "Playgirls in the Night," "Freckle but Allure", "Lovers' Hideaway," "Bar Girl," "Nymphs," "Hot Affairs," "She Stroked By Night," "Lovers' Lair," "Innocent Sex For Eva" and "Flower in Heat"!

Is it time we stop thinking so "colonially"? Talkpoint.net

"MY KONTRABIDA GIRL." Waiting in the wings



GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPIN — BY ED MORRIS

FUSED BABY — BY PAL JUNOD

DICK TRACY — BY JOE STATON AND MIKE CURTIS

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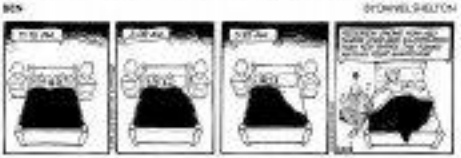

NUTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

SHERMAN'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN — BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF MAHIN

TAGAK — BY HANA COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

THIS WEEK TODAY: You're a creative, compassionate person, and somebody close to you knows better. You have big ideas, and you make explosive connections using your senses. Others sense this about you and are attracted to you because they admire you. Something you've been involved with for about two years will demand an ending you'll make sound like a beginning. Birthdays of Pearl Bowman, actress; Mark Steele, actor; Olivia Wilde, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Don't take it personally if someone you've been friendly with for a long time suddenly starts acting cold. Don't confront them with the issue. Others misinterpret simple actions, but they're not trained, like you are.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) Use today's energy to do routine work that requires attention to detail. Start your day with your personal issues. Stick to a basic list for work and play. (You get to choose what.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Friends might feel their abilities are an increased responsibility for some issues today. We suggest you settle the territory, doesn't it? Cancer once again to the challenge.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Someone else, perhaps a co-worker, might take on one of your tasks today. It's better to get involved in family activities today. (Perhaps it's a chance to...

...do just that.) Any day, it's best to follow your own rules today. Remember that work is actually a game, and it's completely creative endeavor. (No pun intended.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Virgo, is there so much to do with little time? Of course it is! This is how you deal today. Tomorrow will be different.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Don't be anxious about your finances today. Your assumptions is because of the other things that worry you that they really are. It's a matter of point of view. Work closer to him.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You might feel out of sorts today. Your others today. Work both, you are creating ways to express yourself, but without that, create a picture?

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Sometimes what appears to be a personal problem is really the changing tides. DON'T let it get you down. Instead, ride the changing tides. Don't let it get you down. Instead, ride the changing tides.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Others are in authority figures, and you need to put on something today. Overcome. But you'll have to work for approval or permission to anything. Don't be so afraid to express your own opinion.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) You'll have to be mindful of others' feelings today. Don't be so strong. Be kind. Remember, people are not always aware of what others feel. Be sensitive, supportive, understanding, empathetic.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Pisces, you're all set and ripe for fall. Conversations, meetings, insurance matters, family, and shared property. You'll be surprised by how much you will get done!

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and more plans at www.sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle

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4	3	1	8	6	5	7	9	2
5	9	6	1	2	3	8	4	7
7	2	8	4	9	7	5	1	6
8	4	5	3	1	6	2	7	3
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Conceptis Sudoku — By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ★★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Longwinding
5 Early Mesoamerican people
10 Lunch, dinner, etc.
11 Lunar rover
12 Mexico
13 Conventional pattern
14 Fine fabrics
15 Cheese coating
16 Uncooked
17 Unsolicited messages
18 Small business corporations
19 Mayhem
20 Beginning
21 Shamrocks
22 Ancient African land
23 Ancient Greek city
24 Part of an alloy
25 Cut one's wild ways
26 Lens for the shadow
28 Weekend away
30 Bird's beak
31 Scientific societies
32 Wayne and Garth, maybe
33 Mathematical division sign
34 Ancient Greek region
35 Personal pitch
36 Principles
37 Jam holders
38 Jobs for us
41 Parts of half apples
42 Part of a bathroom
43 Straight ahead
44 Ancient Greek region
45 Ancient Greek region
46 Ancient Greek region
47 Ancient Greek region
48 Ancient Greek region
49 Quickly
52 Supreme Master
53 Cuban dog
54 Cuban dog
55 Kinds of Mercedes

DOWN

1 Fashionable people
2 Bob and Bill
3 Bob and Bill
4 Bob and Bill
5 Dairy product
6 Bob and Bill
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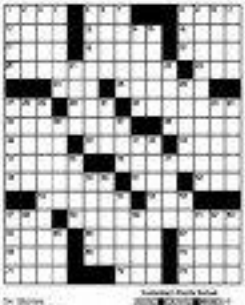

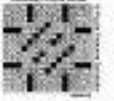

Healing from shared trauma

HANKS AND HORN. Portray father and son in Stephen Daldry's "9/11 drama.

By Nestor U. Torre

THE 9/11 tragedy was such a traumatic experience for the United States that it has challenged American artists to push their abilities to the limit to try to make psychic sense of it and help the wounded nation attain healing and closure.

It was an immensely shattering shared trauma that involved the standard modes of dramatic investigation: Iraqi and Taliban, as nothing less than a new way of expression has had to be devised to approximate its psychological complexity. That new approach is what makes the current film, "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close," such a vital and unconventional

HEALING F4

Highlights, sidelights and record-setters at the Oscars

By Hector M. Torres

LIKE MANY film buffs, we awoke up early last Feb. 27 after a dinner party that ended at midnight. It was Academy Awards morning, day, and we simply had to see it through. Even beginning to end, because we had an empathetic stake in the 83rd Best Actress race: We were shocked to learn that, despite her having been nominated for an Oscar a record 17 times in the course of her iconic career, Meryl Streep had won only two awards—Best Supporting Actress for "Kramer vs Kramer" and Best Actress for "Sophie's Choice."

It was, terribly unfair, so we left delighted to see all of our empathetic psychic "powers" to make the Academy's 5,000 voters do the right thing this time around (the unqualified Meryl has scored Best Actress Oscar for her spot-on personality-cross of Margaret Thatcher...how does such honor stress you?)

STREEP Well-deserved triumph.

CRYSTAL He's cool personified.

Power of persuasion

Of course, we really had no such power of persuasion over the US Film Academy, but it was definitely less convincing than unquestionably taking it on the chin again for our much-saddened sister.

Since the Best Actress category winners would be announced toward the end of the three-hour awards show, we first had to put up with "appearance" before we got to Meryl's moment of truth.

Happily, the first offering was a 4-year Billy Crystal-a-thon(ed) as Oscar emcee host. He laid odd with his signature staging without and spent of the year's Best Picture nominees, which he joshed off with wit and panache.

The first few awards went to Melissa Leo-mere's "Hugo," making some viewers wonder if the production could pull off an upset and grab top honors from the "predestined" winner. The Artist. Lots of rooms, that passport turned out to be a paper dream, as the silent movie romped off, not just with the Best Picture trophy, but also the year's key awards for Best Director, Actor, etc.

Another favorable aspect, was that most of the show's acceptance speeches were short and sweet. Only the European winners tended to milk the occasion for all of the media mileage it had to offer—possibly out of a Jolie-induced fear that she would be the first one to miss that they would even get to isolate viewers with their extensive verbal faux-and-bobbin.

Oldest awardee

Other highlights and sidelights: Christopher Plummer—named the record-holder at 82 years old, he's now the oldest living Oscar awardee (Best Supporting Actor for "Beginners").

And, most movingly, honors from dazed Hollywood way: Is-hers that, inside a big, star-peppered somebody—as an old aunt Mallard movie fans will remember that Shirl was a popular flick star only a few years, and chose to give up all that fame and fashion to pursue his religious calling.

Now decades later, that supposed heroine one of her order's ministers was featured in a New Dress rummage—and all of Hollywood took her to its collective heart again!

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PANS' DAY

Jodi, Xyriel deserve another showcase

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"I also like La Diva. They're fun singers and performers, individually and as a trio. Their production numbers on Pinoy Pilipinas' always stand out."

Other notes:

Nova Lourdes Manuel Rondriz, business-woman: "I watched Manny Pacquiao's fight last 13 months. My favorite room was when Sarah (Alyssa Angeles) finally acknowledged Mama (Krista Kleiner) as her mother. Her acting felt so real and natural."

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Mixed reactions

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Tawi-Tawi on my mind

By Bebs Cervantes

WHEN I first heard the poetic name of Tawi-Tawi, it resonated my mind so much as Boni Ilaco, Bali Mai and Thai before that. It sounded like another Shangri-La, a "Lost Horizon" or Eden, so remote or inaccessible.

I wanted to visit Tawi-Tawi as soon as possible. After all, I've been all over the States, Canada and Mexico, and most of Europe. Hence, it also long to go to Kalibata, because my late father wanted to visit that part of Indio.

When I found Tawi-Tawi being mentioned in local movies by the likes of Fernando Poe Jr. and Boni del Rosario, I longed to go even more.

When exotic Tawi-Tawi is mentioned, I think of tropical trees, beautiful natives, big fish and whole lot more. It is blessed with Mother Nature's bounty. But, it took me decades to accomplish my dream of visiting the place.

When 2012 arrived, I began planning for the trip. I found an inexpensive ticket (on Philippine Airlines) and flew to Zamboanga City, where old friend, Tinggoy San Agustin, and his wife, Heidi, were residents.

I prepared myself for inconveniences, like the heat. Tinggoy warned me about malaria. Thus, I bought OFF to scare—better safe than sorry.

Prayers

I expected to see colorful tribes. Instead, when I finally arrived in Tawi-Tawi, there were powerful pamphlets that piled their spirals over his nerves—the ships and Shanghai. The Department of Tourism (DOT) should be ashamed of itself and flew to Zamboanga City, where old friend, Tinggoy San Agustin, and his wife, Heidi, welcomed me.

I walked around the island and heard endless tunes in its western music. Why don't their children play regional music, instead, so that as you go around the "Little Venice of Southeast," you'll feel "regional," instead of being alienated?

As soon as they announce an aircraft's arrival or regional capitals, airlines should play the place's local music, so tourists can "vibrate" themselves properly. Why announce a plane landing in Zamboanga to music from Chicago place in the backgrounds? ...Why, indeed?

Akafellas at Centris Walk

MUSIC AND dance take Centris Walk at Eton Centris this month. Every Friday at 6 p.m. and Sunday at 7 a.m. (starting from Gold's Gym will leave before the dance party into a fitness activity through Zumba sessions.

Every Saturday at 7 p.m., the popular pop a cappella group, The Akafellas, will delight guests with their amazing vocal prowess.

And the developer of Centris Walk, Eton Properties Philippines Inc., is marking its fifth year this month by way of the "Anniversary Revive" exhibit at Centris' activity area until March 31. Call 687-3888, or visit www.eton.com.ph.

Pre-Easter dinner-dance

Jardin Vine restaurant on UN Ave. will hold a pre-Easter dinner-dance affair on 7 p.m. on Saturday, March 19. Organized by Vincent Vilata and hosted by Bert Fortun, it will showcase the dancing prowess of Vilata and Sisa Aguilar in tandem and thumbs, and Rose and Tessy Lasala, as well as Rowland and Sandy in other ballroom dances. RSVP at 05, or text 0917 553-6731.

Movies on TV

On HBO today at 6:20 p.m., "Back to the Future." Tomorrow at 10:20 a.m., "Apollo 13." March 14 at noon, "Open Gold." March 15 at 9:55 a.m., "Odd Job."

MONTAGE

AKAFELLAS. Transform dance party into a fitness activity.

hospital." March 14 at noon, "Valentine's Day." March 15 at 11:30 p.m., "Jaws." March 16 at noon, "Jaws 2."

On Cinemax today at 4 p.m., "Star Trek." Tomorrow at 4:05 p.m., "Rocky." March 12 at 6:25 p.m., "Rocky: Marciano." March 13 at 4 p.m., "Charade." March 14 at 6 a.m., "The Real Thing." March 15 at 8:20 p.m., "Francesca Bertie." March 16 at 5:30 p.m., "To Catch A Thief."

Free trips and phones

Nobody Limit, in coordination with Sun Cellular, is giving away 10 Vivitar's Limit girl travel trips for two and 10 Sun Cellular phone kits until March 31. Simply execute a Victory Limit ticket and purchase any of the affordable Sun Prepaid Bundles at participating terminals in Cubao, Pasay and Bicutan City to get raffle coupons and instant gift packs.

'This Means War'

Chris Pine and Tom Hardy play the CIA's deadliest operatives who are also best friends...until they fall for the same woman (Reese Witherspoon) after bringing down end-to-enemy subsets. They now employ their amazing skills—against each other!

Ballet David Campos

"The Sleeping Beauty" and "Giselle," as uniquely mounted and performed by Ballet David Campos of Barcelona, will be presented by Instituto Cervantes de Manila at CCP on March 22 to 25 ("Giselle"); then March 24 and 25 ("Giselle"). Four Filipino ballet dancers trained in Spain will also be given principal roles. Call 832-2708 or 892-9999.

'Up All Night'

At 8 p.m. on Wednesday, March 14, Saul Arenas' premiere "Up All Night," with Christina Applegate playing a modern woman who believes she doesn't have to compromise her career and her reputation for motherhood.

And, at 9:00 p.m., Pfizkers Comedy Central shows DYEL play a "happily unmarried" couple in "Whitney."

OtterBox Drop Test

On March 16 and 17, the fun-loving of the Shredder Group Test Team will test their DYEL B.L.S. 9 to 9 p.m. Call 373-7771.

'Live.A.L.I.V.E.'

UP Ismodeum is staging the 2011 production of "Live ALIVE" on March 16, 17 and 18 at the Abelardo Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City. The musical comedy-variety show features hilarious spoofs of celebrated events and famous personalities, as well as exciting production numbers. Call 981-8500 or 981-8506.

Healing from shared . . .

From page F3

viewing experience.

The film studies the context and depth of its characters' shared memories by documenting its efforts on a boy (Thomas Horn) whose father (Tom Hanks) dies during the 9/11 attack. He's an introvert and psychological savant who's unable to let anyone get close to him. He finds a key in his father's closet—a mysterious key—and begins a big, star-peppered somebody—as an old aunt Mallard movie fans will remember that Shirl was a popular flick star only a few years, and chose to give up all that fame and fashion to pursue his religious calling.

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E-mail: supplements@inquirer.com.ph

ROADTALK Saturday

Supplement Head Jong Arcano

8 years and still going strong

MIAS continues to be the biggest annual local motoring event

By Alvin Uy

SINCE 2005, the Manila International Auto Show (MIAS) has already opened its doors to about half a million visitors who make it the annual automotive pilgrimage. MIAS had only one vision – to put up a world-class exhibition venue for the Philippine automotive industry. Its maiden effort in 2005 featured 15 auto brands with a total exhibition floor area of just a little over 6,000 square meters, and it has since grown to over 20,000 sqm of indoor and outdoor exhibit space, over 400 car exhibits and over 10 automotive and motorcycle brands, creating an unparalleled exhibition not only in automotive but in all trade and consumer shows that we have ever had in the country.

The core, aside from the 50,000 Trade exhibition hall and lobby of 10,000 sqm and the 3,200 sqm East Wing annex building and some 6,000 sqm of outdoor exhibit and water performance area, MIAS has added some 4,000 sqm of exhibition floor space at the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) building and has added another 3,000 sqm of additional covered area using a prefabricated aircon tent building. The combined outdoor and indoor exhibition floor area of 20,000 sqm continues to make MIAS the country's biggest annual motoring event.

Guinness World Record holder in motorcycle driving Hiro Ibrill will join with another thrilling show with the trusty Subaru Impreza rides. Then Ibrill returns to Manila with the same stunt in his preferred to roll-out crowd three times daily for the whole duration of the show. He will also be here to launch Subaru's new XV crossover SUV while together with Motor Image Singapore CEO Glenn Yin, hosts distributor for Subaru.

BPI Auto Loans and Petron sign up for MIAS 2012

BPI Family Auto Loans is once again the official promoter of the MIAS 2012. Last year, BPI celebrated its 160 years of banking and loans. Known for its "Auto Madness" campaign, special financial packages await those buyers with easy financing plans with its auto-car financing options. Petron, the country's leading fuel brand is the main promoter for the Petron-MIAS Custom Classic Car Competition. Some 100 custom, vintage and classic cars will compete for top honors as they prep their cars for the most coveted Petron-MIAS "Best of show" award.

Life in the fast lane

This year's theme, Life in the Fast Lane, is a very appropriate theme as for the first time, MIAS one of Asia's oldest automotive associations will honor the country's top drivers in a formal gala evening affair to be held on the second evening (invitation only via the media). Celebrity and actor Jomari Yllana will also launch his own racing team dubbed as the "Dare Factor." Join with the highly-tuned Hyundai Genesis club race car Team, involving School will also conduct seminars on racing techniques and road safety while in Subic. Meanwhile, Bern luxury-tuner brand Carlsson will also showcase two highly customized Mercedes-Benzes, complete with engine modifications and bodyworks. Lastly, BMW is expected to have a good line up of its venerable "M" motorsport models.

New model launches

As most of the participants this year had updated their displays to the auto exhibition hall, some expanding to as much as 1,000 sqm for a single brand, the coveted Car of the Year awards night will also be held on the first evening of MIAS on March 28. Live festival gala evening affair to be held in conjunction with the Car Awards Group Inc., composed of various motoring journalists led by Top Gear Magazine senior editor Norman Lao. Just like last year, the awards night will be hosted by TV personality Sarah Geronimo and the automotive industry's most coveted title is again up for grabs with the announcement of the top consumers-elite car after balloting. Invited to vying this year's new model launches and according to the exhibitors, viewers can look forward to the launching of the following cars – the new Ford Ranger and its2 Explorer, Hyundai Veloster and EON subcompact, plus the debut of its factory supported Genesis Coupe 2.0R race car, Subaru XV WRX Coupe Roadster and Coupe, Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG coupe, Foton's new Thunder pick-up and Chana's new King Long coaster among others. As of this writing, there are still other cars to

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PROMO DURATION: March 1, 2012 to May 31, 2012

Avail of a 30% discount on parts and 15% discount on labor on these Service Plus Express packages

FREE 18-POINT CHECK-UP

FUSO

BPI Family Auto Loan makes 'Life in the Fast Lane' easy, presents 2012 Manila International Auto Show

By Jason K. Ang

BPI FAMILY Auto Loan announced that it will once again promote the Manila International Auto Show (MIAS) as the show opens its 8th edition this year. This will be the second straight year that BPI Family Auto Loan will be promoting MIAS. It is especially appropriate this year that MIAS' theme is "Life in the Fast Lane." BPI Family's process makes it easy and fun to apply for a car loan, particularly for BPI and BPI Family Savings Bank clients.

MIAS will be open from March 29 to April 1 at the World Trade Center and Philippine Trade Training Center.

MIAS is the Philippines' biggest annual motoring event, with more than 300 cars on display from more than 30 brands.

From ultra-affordable subcompacts to luxury SUVs, MIAS will have them all at the World Trade Center. Car buyers will find it convenient to look at fresh models right on the show floor, and compare offerings from the various manufacturers and distributors.

At MIAS' official presenter, BPI Family Auto Loan will be offering its pioneering low one year homeowner takeh here at Yuhuo coverage promo. The BPI Family Auto Loan team will be onsite at MIAS to offer auto loans to qualified car-buyers.

"We are the continued love affair of Filipinos to have their own cars. Our partnership with Pinakbet Services International for the 8th Manila International Auto Show is in line with our commitment to make car ownership easy for Filipinos. With BPI Family Savings Bank as the MIAS, we can help you decide which one suits you best and provide 1 year comprehensive insurance with zero deductible coverage - free for one year," says David Sarmiento, Jr., SVP and Auto Loans Division head. "This way, we also help Filipinos prepare for the unexpected and events that when typhoons, floods or other calamities hit., they are newly protected."

BPI Family Auto Loan offers affordable interest rates and free insurance, and also promises fast three to eight hours credit approval, and free BPI Mastercard with free fuel and fuel rebates given upon loan approval. Paying for your loan is also made more convenient because of BPI's wide range of payment channels such as auto debit arrangement, Express Online, Express Payment and ATM.

Sarmiento adds, "During the MIAS, we offer to the public deals that will give them the best value for their money that no other banks have offered before. We encourage car buyers to visit and join us at the 8th Manila International Auto Show to help them decide which brand new car to buy."

During the presentation, BPI Family invited members of the media for try out the new auto loans online application system at www.bpifamily.com. The system helpfully lists down car models and their prices. During the live demonstration, the "application" users able to submit their loan application easily to several car dealers.

The Manila International Auto Show, presented by BPI Family Auto Loan, is open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the World Trade Center and Philippine Trade Training Center.

AT THE press launch of BPI Family Bank presenting MIAS 2012 are, from left, David G. Sarmiento Jr., senior vice president of auto and motorcycle loans, BPI Family Savings Bank; Jose Teodoro K. Limcaoco, president of BPI Family Savings Bank; Joseph Ang, chair, Worldwise Services International and MIAS co-organizer and Ramon Noel S. Altamirano, vice president/division head for product marketing, BPI Family Savings Bank

ALL systems for MIAS are go! BPI Family and Worldwise bosses prize the power human: Sarmiento, Limcaoco, Ang and Altamirano.

AAP Motorsports honors top racers

THE AUTOMOBILE Association Philippines (AAP) will give honors to the six top racing drivers and it will hold the 17th Annual Motorsports Awards on March 30 at the Philippine Trade Training Center (PTTC) in Pasay City. In partnership with the country's biggest motoring event, the Manila International Auto Show is slated on March 29 to April 1 at the World Trade Center Manila (WTCM) and PTTC.

AAP is the sole four-wheel motorsport governing body in the country and the only national Auto Club affiliated with the Federation Internationale de' Automobile (FIA), the Paris-based organization that governs motorsport worldwide. This year, AAP will give the highest recognition to four top drivers in Drag, Slalom, Hillclimb and Karting as two of the six disciplines under the AAP banners ribbon-cut touring and GTC DP road that not filled up the best driver awardee.

AAP Motorsports chair Mandy Eduque expressed his appreciation to all race organizers and competitors for another job well done in last year's races. "It was a safe and well organized races. All competitors went all their way to be more competitive each year, making safety as number one concern and showing civic-ness to the sport."

"To congratulate each and everyone who made it to the top and being member of AAP for the 2011 season and to all who supported motorsports events last year", Eduque added.

17th Annual Motorsports Awards awardees

2011 Driver of the Year
Karting
Stefano Marzolo
Drag
Marvin Manalo
Hillclimb
Carlos Anton
Slalom
Noel Bravo

2011 GT Series Class champions
GT 3.0 Class champion
Marc Peter Thomsen
GT 1.6 Class champion

Brian Fores
GT 2.0 Class champion
Dwight Kevin Carlos
GT 3.0 Class champion
Vicente Hontanilla

2010 National karting Class champions
Cadet
Raymond Cadela
Mini ROK
Carl Dollogosa
Romnalin M. Mendoza
Sasha Marie Feliciano
Romanie M. Expert
Joseph Marwin Rojo
ROK Senior
Matthew Cobeya Chua
ROK Junior
Franco Victor Reyes
ROK Senior
Keshan Marondo

Grab-a-Cab dispatching system here

GRAB-A-CAB, an industry leading, affordable, automated dispatch system, is here.

This Internet based taxi dispatch service is provided by Philippine Taxi Dispatching Systems Inc., the Philippine's first in-service taxi fleet management solution, designed primarily for small or mid-sized taxi fleets that do not require full-scale enterprise level fleet management capabilities. It is available as a subscription-based monthly service. The bundle includes 24/7 radio booking and dispatching functions, in-vehicle mobile data terminals and antenna, automatic vehicle location, support, maintenance, and training. The components can access the system's server computers from anywhere in the world using a Personal Computer (PC) with a high-speed Internet connection.

Taxi dispatching system has been used in New York, Singapore, Malaysia and even in Indonesia. With the high price of fuel now, Taxi operators must subscribe in this new technology. Small fleet operators are also encouraged to join. Grab-a-Cab will dispatch bookings through its hotline 525-3333.

"Increased revenue of taxi operators and their drivers is critical in sustaining and growing our business," said RIC OPIA, president of Grab-a-Cab. "We realized that by introducing the Taxi Dispatching System in the Philippines, we can help small and medium taxi operators to have this new technology at minimal cost. With this system, we can minimize idle miles through more efficient job distribution and reduce the chance of human error thereby improving our overall efficiencies. This is what we hope to achieve with this new system."

"More number of jobs per vehicle and fair distribution of jobs to all taxi drivers should create a win-win situation for all," Opia enumerated. "In addition, we plan to extend some conveniences to our customers such as self-serve booking options that this new system will support. This will also off-load our call-takers during busy hours."

"Communicating over-common cellular networks has also made it very cost-effective for small to medium sized companies to take advantage of computerized fleet management systems because this eliminates the need for upfront communications infrastructure costs," Dennis Ng, chief technical officer of Grab-A-Cab said.

For demo and more details, call 525-2222 or visit www.grab-a-cab.ph

Return of the Swift

Life is faster with stunt driver Russ Swift behind the wheel

By Jason K. Ang

MANILA International Auto Show's theme this year is "Life in the Fast Lane," and nobody does it faster than Russ Swift. After running MIAS events for the past five years, Russ Swift will once again showcase his incredible driving prowess at the outdoor display area of MIAS, from March 29 to April 1 at the World Trade Center. The Russ Swift show is supported by Subaru, as Swift has been driving the brand's sporty sedans and hatchbacks exclusively in the MIAS events.

Holder of multiple Guinness World Records, Russ Swift is back once again in Manila with his second photographic feat including his signature two-wheeled stunt, donut spins and tight parallel parking maneuvers. Behind the wheel of the Impreza WRX STI sedan as well as other Subaru models, Russ Swift is sure to leave a lasting impression through his circular tire marks and the aroma of roasted rubber.

Russ Swift was a two British Autocross Championships as well as an International Rally in Sweden. Swift made his amazing performance debut in 1998 and has been touring in over since.

Since then Russ has established himself as the world's number one display driver with numerous TV commercials, and car brands to his credit world-wide. Russ has now performed over 8,000 displays in over 50 countries including America, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia.

Russ has revolutionized International Motor Shows. As a result of Russ's displays at various motor shows, many have adopted the "Live" theme for the whole show theme. TV appearances include starring gimmicks to the donut on Top Gear, and the donut world record. Russ established three Guinness world records - Parallel parking in the tightest spots, 3 Turn in the tightest spot and the fastest donuts.

Expert diesel service discounts for Isuzu owners in 20+20+20 Promo

ISUZU expert Isuzu Philippines Corp. (IPC) is offering huge discounts on expert diesel labor, parts and lubricants to Isuzi Isuzu customers when they have their vehicles serviced in any Isuzu dealership nationwide starting March 1. Called the 20+20+20 Promo, IPC's latest campaign offers a 20 percent discount on labor charges, 20 percent off on purchases of Isuzu parts, and lubricants priced 20 percent less.

"Isuzu vehicles have built a strong reputation for their reliability, durability and high quality," said IPC president Ryuji Yamazaki. "To ensure that they remain that way, it is best that they get serviced by the Trusted Experts."

Isuzu dealerships, including their branches and satellite offices, boast of highly trained service personnel that can professionally maintain, repair and install equipment on any Isuzu vehicle. With IPC's support, they are also assured of the availability of genuine Isuzu parts. Plus, their modern facilities guarantee the best workmanship resulting the possibility of providing full-service convenience, and comfortable customer areas. These lead to a pleasurable dealership experience that cannot be matched by service stations or other non-Isuzu authorized service centers.

"Isuzu Philippines Corp.'s 20+20+20 Promo is one of the company's way of thanking Isuzu customers for their consistent trust," Yamazaki said.

To avail of the special offer, Isuzu owners may take their vehicles to any IPC dealership, branch or satellite office for servicing. A 20 percent discount on labor charges (before VAT) is automatically applied on most services except body repair, painting, washing/detailing, undercoating, any more/more claim-related repair, accessory installation including tinting and other rubber services.

Also instantly reduced by 20 percent (pre-VAT) is the total cost of genuine Isuzu parts and consumables purchased during the servicing, excluding OEM equipment like batteries and tires, accessories, paint and other small items.

Meanwhile, lubricants and fluids are also priced 20 percent less (pre-VAT) when these are bought during servicing. Included in the offer are Isuzu Genuine motor oils, Diesel engine oil, Transaxle automatic transmission fluid, Coolant/brake and clutch fluid, Isuzu Genuine coolant and Thollem gear oil. Purchases of over-the-counter parts, lubricants and fluids are also entitled to a 20 percent discount.

The 20+20+20 Promo starts on March 1 and will last up to May 31.

The expert diesel service deals are available at Metro Manila Isuzu dealerships in Alabang, Commonwealth, Edsa, Makati, Manila, Pasig and Quezon Avenue; Luzon Isuzu dealerships in Batangas, Balintawak, Calamba, Cavite, Isabela, Olongapo, Pangasinan and San Pablo; Visayas-Mindanao Isuzu dealerships in Bacolod, Cagayan De Oro, Davao, General Santos, Iloilo, and Mandaue; and Isuzu branches or satellite offices in Bohol, Dumaguete, Cebu, Legazpi, Dipolog, Dumaguete, Greenhills, Legazpi, Lucena, Meycauayan, Rizal, Talisay and Tuguegarao.

For more details, log on to www.isuzuphil.com.

Reward yourself twice:

Win a Mazda CX-9

MAZDA Philippines is rewarding its Mazda CX-9 customers with a chance to win another brand-new CX-9 when they purchase the premium crossover SUV from now until March 31.

Mazda CX-9 combines sporty driving dynamics with the functionality of a seven-passenger sport utility vehicle (SUV). A class break from conventional SUVs, the Mazda CX-9 crossover SUV has won high marks for its dynamic styling, powerful driving performance and spacious interior.

"The Mazda CX-9 perfectly combines bold design, energetic performance, unmatched versatility and premium comfort. We invite new customers, old and new, to visit our dealerships and rediscover the Mazda CX-9," said Ingbert Castillo, assistant vice president for sales of Mazda Philippines.

The Mazda CX-9 delivers spirited driving and unmatched performance through a 3.7 liter V6 engine coupled to a six-speed automatic transmission to provide optimum acceleration and passing performance together with excellent highway fuel efficiency: 10.2/7.3 liters/km (city/highway).

Buyers are distributed to all four wheels via an all-wheel drive system for superb handling and traction for any road conditions.

The Mazda CX-9 retails for P2,388,000.

To learn more about Mazda, visit any of the nine authorized dealerships: Mazda Alabang, Mazda Greenhills, Mazda Makati, Mazda Quezon Avenue, Mazda Batangas, Mazda Pampanga, Mazda Dagupan, Mazda Cebu and Mazda Cagayan de Oro.

Find us on facebook: www.facebook.com/MazdaPhilippines

Volvo Car Corporation partner in development of smart charging concept for electric cars

VOLVO Car Corp.'s focus on sustainability technology also includes smart features for charging of electric vehicles. The company is one of the partners in the research project Electric Vehicle Integrated Infrastructure (EVE) that develops a smart on-board concept for controlling, measuring and paying for electricity when charging via any outlet.

EVE is a consortium involving Volvo Car Corp., Ericsson, the utility company Göteborg Energi and the Malardalen University. The consortium research project aims several initiatives one being mobile connectivity in electric cars and evidently and remove barriers for using electrical vehicles in daily life. The concept works like this:

• The driver can choose to charge the battery pack via any ordinary power outlet.

• The outlet is identified via GPS.

• The driver pre-sets timing and charging amount on the touch screen or remotely via a smart phone or tablet.

• During the mobile network, the car communicates with the grid and sets the charging scheme in order to support optimal utilization of the grid and meet favorable energy price.

• Any unintended interruption of charging process is directly reported to the driver's mobile phone.

• The operator directs the cost for each charge to the car owner's personally billing.

Electric drive-without components: The Volvo C30 Electric has been used as a test car in the project. Equipped with an integrated 7-inch color touch screen, it makes the smooth charging concept available at the driver's fingertip. Five C30 Electric cars will now be used for testing and evaluating the technology during a year.

"Our basic view is that the owner of an electric vehicle shouldn't have to sacrifice any of the properties he or she expects from a luxury car," says Lennart Ringblad, vice president for Electric Propulsion Systems, Volvo Car Corp. "This smart technology for charging in any outlet, and paying autonomously via your own electricity bill, is an excellent example of how we do everything to make the daily use easier for the customer." The concept is developed as a joint development project platform to make the technology globally applicable.

Totally in control, totally connected

The EVE technology is fully in line with Volvo Car Corp.'s development of human technology, which makes the driver feel totally in control and totally connected.

"Intrinsic is the intention that provides interior communication with the car, connecting it to the driver's digital world. We will continue to extend the offer of intelligent content that provides easy access to support, information and entertainment," says Lennart Ringblad.

PNB partners with DLSU for the Green Light Project

THE UNIVERSITY Student Government and the Mechanical Engineering Society of De La Salle University will be holding an advocacy-based car show competition entitled "Automoved: The Green Light Project".

The two-day car show will be held at the Philippine National Bank (PNB) Main Office grounds along Dasmariñas Macapagal Boulevard, Pasay City on March 17 to 18.

In partnership with PNB, the car show aims to raise funds for the Child Friendly Spaces Project of the University Student Government.

The event will run from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on the first day and 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on the second day, and will showcase various cutting, interior and hobbies of car enthusiasts, particularly those from the Lasallian community.

The events will feature performers, exhibitors and car dealers. Guests may also avail of great deals through PNB's special auto loan rates during the event.

Organizational roles

The University Student Government (USG) recognizes its vital role in promoting academic holistic formation through different programs and activities aimed to address the needs and interests of the students, as well as community development projects. On the other hand, the Mechanical Engineering Society (MES) is the professional organization of Mechanical Engineering students, which caters to the needs and interests of their members, including organizing car shows, which can in turn help their Gold of profession.

Child-friendly spaces

This year, in line with the university's mission of bridging faith and scholarship in service of the poor, the USG, together with the DLSU Center for Social Concern and Action, spearheaded the Child Friendly Spaces Project. It is an advocacy in line with the UN Millennium development goals to give safety and security to the children in dispersed communities by creating child-friendly spaces for them.

The space consists of a daycare, study area, mini-library and a computer room. The first child-friendly space was constructed this school year in Barangay 704 in Malate, Manila. Through the project, the USG may be able to attain sustainability of their efforts not only to help the children but the community as a whole. Together with MES through the Automoved 2012: The Green Light Project, they plan to expand and create more child-friendly spaces in the upcoming school year.

FORD CLUB PHILIPPINES CELEBRATES 10TH ANNIVERSARY

FORD Club Philippines (FCP) recently celebrated its 10th anniversary last Feb. 25, gathering more than 2000 FCP members and displaying more than 100 Ford vehicles onsite. These were Ford Focus variants were introduced by Ford Philippines, which include the 1.5L Ford Focus Sport Plus hatchback, and the 1.4L Ford Focus Trend with automatic transmission in both hatchback and sedan. The Focus continues to drive Ford's momentum in the Philippines with sales totalling to nearly 4,000 units since its launch late 2010.

Geneva report: Automakers put snarl in small car design

GENEVA—Small cars were looking more stout and sporty at the Geneva Auto Show on Tuesday as global automakers struggling to make a profit in Europe tried to entice customers to look past the continent's economic gloom.

Ford promised the B-Max, a subcompact aimed at families, while Mercedes is looking for younger buyers—road under 30—for the new A Class. Audi rolled out the third generation in its A3 series, which US auto giant touts the first compact in the premium market.

Fiat launched its 500L, an elongated version of the tiny 500 city car that is being made in Serbia, and Toyota has put a little muscle in the hybrid version of its best-selling Yaris to give it a more aggressive look. Peugeot is adding an automotive standard by making its new 208 smaller than its predecessor.

The launches are a far cry from the days when small cars were shunned by consumers. While remaining easy-to-fuel commuting and light-cargo machines, these models are stuffed with the latest safety features and crashes of heavy weapons up the compact and subcompact segments that comprise some 60 percent of the European market.

"Remember when smaller cars used to be cheap and cheerful? Now the consumers want the finest quality, the finest fuel efficiency, safety and design," said Ford CEO Alan Mulally.

The problem for European mass-market automakers is that consumers demand less shrouded under the pressure of the sovereign debt crisis—but your sales are expected to shrink nearly 5 percent to 12.9 million units, according to the Centre for Automotive Research.

The onset of the financial crisis in 2008 brought cash-for-clunker incentives that allowed drivers to get a bonus to buy a new car if they junked an old one. The incentives propped up the industry and delayed the inevitable restructuring with the fact that Europe has too many vehicle factories—something most European automotive top shoulder's been pointed.

"I don't want investments or financial assistance," said Fiat and Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne told reporters. "Fiat is financially solid and opposes any intervention to prop up the market."

Fiat is among a long list of European automakers that are losing money in Europe. That includes Peugeot-Citroen PSA, General Motors' Adam Opel, and Renault. Fiat is aiming to build cars in Italy for export to the United States, where it has a 58.4 percent share in Chrysler through a nearly three-year-old alliance.

But if Fiat needs to streamline in Italian factories, which are operating at just 60 percent capacity, according to figures from JD Automotive.

Idle production lines cut profits, said Ferdinando Uliano, Fiat's chief operating officer for Italy. Unions and national politicians to say down to close factories in response.

Stephen Odell, CEO of Ford of Europe, said European policymakers should stop getting in the way of plant closures as the industry seeks to balance supply with declining demand. Ford's plants are running about 90 percent, thanks to closures in 2006 and 2009.

"I believe policymakers can stop making statements that they understand capacity should be taken out—but not in my country," Odell said.

A fresh alliance inked last week between General Motors Peugeot is a sign that the industry is looking at ways to cut costs.

GM will take a 7 percent stake in Peugeot, Europe's No. 2 automaker, to shed that focuses a common platform by 2018 and synergies in the purchase of parts. The carmakers say it will save them $2 billion a year within five years, split roughly equally.

So far, the two carmakers have not discussed the possibility of job cuts and factory closures—moves opposed by unions.

The head of General Motors Europe, Karl-Friedrich Stracke, on Tuesday tried to dampen fears of mass job cuts in Europe, but didn't rule them out.

"We need a sustainable setup. It's coupe, we can't see looking at now," Stracke said.

Meanwhile, luxury carmaker Nissan, which is in an alliance with French automaker Renault, announced it is investing 125 million pounds ($198 million) to build the new Qashqai compact car in its Britain factory—a vote of confidence in the production system Europe. Nissan and the Britishcar will compete with Ford's Fiesta and Volkswagen's Polo models, and debut next year. AP

First bus plant in PH opens in Cavite

By Raquel P. Gomez

EXPORTED buses from China that are plying the streets of Manila and provincial roads, many of them second hand and smoke-belchers, may soon be a thing of the past as a new factory for buses has been recently put up in Naic, Cavite.

Government officials, businessmen, bus operators, and bus-crazy residents witnessed the ceribration of the 3-in-1 of the Trans Oriental Motor Builders Inc. (TOMBI), the first bus assembly plant in the country capable of producing 6,000 units of buses a year.

TOMBI is the 6th company registered under the Bureau of Investment's motor development program, which allows for locally assembled to be built vehicles from CKDs or completely knocked down parts, according to BOI executive director Lucita Reyes.

She said TOMBI is also the first company to assemble and produce Chinese models for the Philippines, where Japanese and American car brands have already put up assembly plants.

"The local production of Chinese buses would greatly help the government's program of replacing buses are only in Metro Manila but in rural areas as well. Trans Oriental is producing buses at a very reasonable price," said Reyes.

TOMBI president Chen Lai said prices of the buses assembled and produced in the local plant are relatively cheaper by 15 percent to 20 percent compared to imported buses from China.

TOMBI's plant was put up in close partnership with Xiamen Golden Dragon Bus Co. Ltd., which is a big manufacturer of buses and vans in China. TOMBI's plant uses the technology of Golden Dragon Bus Co. as president quality buses that features vehicle called electro-hydromatic gas transmission technology that improves the economic emissions of the buses.

Before the plug was set up, Lai's company vowed to import buses from Golden Dragon Bus Co. Ltd. and distribute them locally. Eventually, the Xiamen-based bus manufacturer saw the capability of Filipinos to also make buses, thus the partnership was established.

"We want to contribute to the local transportation industry by providing quality and affordable buses. We are also committed to help the economy by creating jobs as well as patronizing the local parts industry," said Jose Lai, CEO of TOMBI.

Aside from jobs creation, the plant also taps into the wealth of talent of Filipinos, who are not only skilled but are known as world-class machinists, added Lai.

So far four bus models are already manufactured, with big bus operators already getting their orders for exporting. Lai said the plant will also assemble and produce vans and will also export buses abroad in the near future.

TOMBI plant sits on 4 hectare property in Barangay Sabang, Naic Cavite. It currently employs 150 people.

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RATES
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DEADLINES
SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 2012

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE 7TH GENERATION RATE ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM (7TH GRAM), WITH PRAYER FOR PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

ERC CASE NO. 2011-XXX RC

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION-SMALL POWER UTILITIES GROUP (NPC-SPUG),
Applicant.
x - - -

Request for Interested Parties for Gas Station Operator in GGLC

Project Location:

Located within Clark Freeport Zone, 177 Tecson Avenue cor. Global Gateway Logistics City, Sport Road 2, Industrial Estate 3, Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga, Philippines 2023.

Project Name:

Gas Plaza – Gas Station Operator

Project Description:

GGLC is the country's first Metropolis located at the main international gateway to Clark Freeport Zone off the SCTEX toll road. Adjacent to the country's largest and fastest growing airport, GGLC is a fully-integrated and master planned logistics/business park catering to a fast moving business clientele. The Gas Plaza will be the first commercial development within GGLC and is located at the first intersection off the SCTEX, providing access to 100% of all traffic coming on and off the SCTEX Clark South exit.

Approximately 1.2 hectares of land, the Gas Plaza will be a high end retail/commercial outlet providing convenience and destination shopping and commercial office space. Situated along a major 10 lane thoroughfare, the Gas Station is comprised of 1,000 sqm and is supported by 25,000 sqm of retail space for branded concessionaires with complimenting office space.

In addition to serving routine traffic, the Gas Operator will also provide all GGLC project fuel requirements estimated in excess of 600,000 liters annually.

GGLC is requesting all interested parties to contact:

John Beukes
Business Development Manager
Hexagon Development International Inc.
0906 845 0666
jbeukes@hexagonintl.com

NATIONAL HISTORICAL COMMISSION OF THE PHILIPPINES
NHCP Building, T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila, The Philippines 1000
Tel. Nos. 527-4459 • 527-7489 • 526-1550 • 524-1982 • 522-1521 • 521-9600

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Historical Commission of the Philippines, through its Bids and Awards Committee (NHCP-BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) or apply their eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the following public contract:

RESTORATION OF NARCISO LIM HOUSE IN ANGELES CITY, PAMPANGA

ABC = P 6,036,041.56
Duration = 120 days
Bid Fee = P 5,000.00

Prospective bidders should have an experience in restoration works of historic structures and should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment listed in the Eligibility Form to undertake the project (evidence of the contract). The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Checklist to carry out the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All participants undertake to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract which will be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

1	Pre-Bid Conference	March 21, 2012 @ 9:30 a.m.
2	Date of Publication (Philippine Website, Newspaper)	March 9 - April 10, 2012
3	Submission of the Eligibility Statements	
4	Technical Proposal and Bid Proposal	March 9 - April 9, 2012
5	Opening of Bids	April 10, 2012 @ 9:00 a.m.
6	Evaluation/Determination of Lowest Calculated Bid	
7	Post-qualification/Investigation on Lowest Calculated Responsive Bid	April 10 - 16, 2012
8	Issuance of Resolution to Award and Notice of Award	April 17 - 18, 2012
9	Contract Preparation	April 19 - 24, 2012
10	Notice to Proceed	April 25, 2012

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders determined by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Bid fee as mentioned above. To the National Historical Commission of the Philippines 754 Kalaw St. Ermita, Manila Cashier.

The National Historical Commission of the Philippines reserves to responsibility whatsoever to compensate incidentally bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **RENATO E. SAYSON**
BAC Chairman

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

GEMMALYN V. GORDONIO
Former Teller - Zone 5
Bocas Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (INEC)

Notice is hereby given that **GEMMALYN V. GORDONIO**, whose picture appears above, is no longer connected with **Bocas Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (INEC)**.

A Warrant of Arrest was issued to her by the Regional Trial Court, Branch 12, Lenog City in its ORDER dated February 13, 2012.

Any person who will give information leading to her arrest will be given a reward by the Bocas Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc.

(Sgd.) ATTY. HARLEN WAYNE D. MANUEL
Legal Counsel for INEC
Contact No.: 09178444873; (077) 7847120; (077) 6701388

LEYTE V ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
P/S, Brgy 102, Brgy. San Pedro, Ormoc City
Tel. Nos. (053)561-41 R.Nos.-11 F. Telefax (053)561-4015

SECTION I - ADVERTISEMENT

INVITATION TO BID

The Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO V) invites interested, eligible dealers, suppliers and manufacturers to submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the materials, hardware and equipment for its various distribution development projects for the year 2012.

These projects shall be financed by the NEA Subsidy, EOE (SPI-MO Fund, and Reinvestment Fund for Sustainable Capital Expenditures (RFSC) of the Cooperative.

Bid documents can be secured from the Pre-Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) Secretariat on **March 19-23, 2012** upon payment of a non-refundable amount of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (P5,000.00).

Sealed bids will be received by the PBAC at LEYECO V Main Office in Brgy.San Pedro, Ormoc City, Leyte on **April 02, 2012** at 10:00 a.m. at which time and place said proposals will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

For the purpose of clarifying issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **March 22, 2012 at 1:30 p.m. at LEYECO V TRAINING ROOM, BRGY SAN PABLO, ORMOC CITY, LEYTE.**

The Cooperative reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any explanation to waive any minor defects or informalities therein and to accept any or all offers as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the Cooperative. It assumes no obligation whatsoever for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(SGD.) ENGR. CRESCENTE E. LOPENA
PBAC Chairman

(SGD.) ENGR. JUANITO B. JORCA, JR.
General Manager

The Ateneo Choir in a night of music

COMPLETE YOUR WEEKEND. LISTEN to the Ateneo de Manila College Glee Club's very own unique singing style that won three major awards in last year's various European concert competitions.

Today, March 10, at their farewell concert, the ACGC will once again treat the public to a rendition of songs giving a glimpse of their world-class singing performances.

The ACGC will be performing under Professor Maria Lourdes V. Reinoso.

The concert is free and will be held at the Church of the Gesu at the Ateneo de Manila University in Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City at 5:00 in the evening.

In its 2011 European Concert Competition Tour, the ACGC earned many distinctions and top prizes in five major choral competitions, including the 11th International Choral Competition Maribor in Slovenia; the 67th Montreux Choral Festival in Switzerland; the 9th International Choir Expo and the Harmony Festival 2011 both in Germany; and the 33rd International Way Choir Competition in Bulgaria where they bagged the first prize in mixed choir category.

As champion of the International May Choir Competition, the ACGC has qualified to participate in the 2012 European Grand Prix (EGP) for choral singing, one of the world's most prestigious choral competitions.

Aside from competing in EGP, the Ateneo choir will be going back to Europe from March to May this year to also compete in the high standard Cork International Choral Festival in Ireland.

The ACGC is accepting voluntary donations which will be used to support the choir expenses for its foreign competitions.

Anybody interested in donating or have any other concerns may contact the concert organizer at 0927-4673009 or e-mail jaginternetting@yahoo.com.

The Ateneo de Manila College Glee Club has thrice successfully conducted concerts in the country: twice last year, in July and September and now with the last one in January this year proving their touring created a niche in the music world.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF JAMBALES DEL NORTE
PROVINCIAL GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE
Provincial Capitol Building, Barretto City
Tel. 47-3045 / P.O. 2101 • Telefax 47-3045 / P.O. 2114

INVITATION TO BID

Plan, Design, Site Development, Construction and Improvements of the Zambalenos del Norte Provincial Capitol and Legislative Building

The Provincial Government of Zambales del Norte through concurrence of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) intends to apply the sum of **Two Hundred Million Pesos only** (P200,000,000.00) being the estimated cost of the Plan, Design, Site Development, Construction and Improvements of the Zambales del Norte Provincial Capitol and Legislative Building. Bids received in excess of this ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening.

The Provincial Government of Zambales del Norte now invites bids for the Plan, Design, Site Development, Construction and Improvements of the Zambales del Norte Provincial Capitol and Legislative Building. Completion of Works is required within **Three Hundred Sixty Five Calendar Days** (365) from the date stated in the Notice to Proceed (NTP). Bidders should have completed, within the last five (5) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, particularly, in Section II, Instruction to Bidders.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least seventy five percent (75%) citizenship or ownership of such shares belonging to citizens of the Philippines.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat, Provincial Capitol Building, Barretto City, and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested bidders on **March 12, 2012** from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of **Ten Thousand Pesos** (Php 10,000.00).

The Provincial Government will hold a Pre - Bid Conference on **March 19, 2012** at the Provincial General Services Office of PGZDN, Capitol Building, Barretto City, which shall be open to all prospective bidders. It shall be held at the Provincial Capitol Building.

Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before **April 05, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.** All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the forms and amounts stipulated in the Bidding Documents, in the amount of **Four Million Pesos** (Php 4,000,000.00).

Bid opening shall be on **April 05, 2012 at 10:01 o'clock** in the morning at the **PROVINCIAL GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE** Capitol Building, Barretto City, which is open to all prospective bidders. Bids will be evaluated on an item basis, or for the whole project, as the Bidding Documents may allow. The Bidder has the option not to be present.

The Provincial Government of Zambales del Norte reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, or annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **EMMANUEL S. LUCERO**
BAC Chairperson
PGSO Capitol Bldg., Barretto City 2101
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National Food Authority (NFA) Administrator Angelito T. Banayo takes a look at an early harvest of palay in the plains of Central Luzon and Pangasinan and the forthcoming purchase of rice farmers at P 18.00/kilo which Mr. Banayo happily votes in good for the farmers. The Department of Agriculture and National Food Authority are currently studying additional incentives to be given to rice farmers.

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Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE INCREMENTAL COSTS DUE FOREIGN CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE FLUCTUATIONS AT THE INCREMENTAL CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE ADJUSTMENT ("ICERA MOD") FACILITY FOR THE PROVISIONAL AUTHORITY

ERC CASE NO. 2011-163 RC

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION - SMALL POWER UTILITIES GROUP (NPC-SPUG),
Applicant

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES:

Notice is hereby given that on December 7, 2011, the National Power Corporation - Small Power Utilities Group (NPC-SPUG) filed an application for recovery of the Incremental Costs on Foreign Currency Exchange Rate Fluctuations under the Incremental Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment ("ICERA MOD") Facility for the provisional authority.

In the said application, NPC-SPUG alleged, among others, that:

1) Pursuant to Section 34 of Republic Act No. 9136 (R.A. 9136), otherwise known as the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 or the EPIRA, it is responsible for providing power generation and for associated system losses, operations in areas that are not connected to the transmission system;

2) In the performance of its mandatory electrification function, it incurs additional operating costs as a result of the fluctuation of the foreign exchange rates which are more or less the foreign currency basket / prevailing indicative cross exchange rates/ published exchange rate movements and has not passed them plus/foreclosed to users;

3) In the Order dated February 23, 2009, the Commission issued and adopted the Implementing Rules for the Incremental Currency Exchange Rate Adjustment (ICERA), providing for, among others, the mechanism for the recovery/refund of the audited incremental under/over-recoveries for the corresponding exchange rate fluctuations and currency changes;

4) The instant application was filed consistent with Section 4 (e) Rule 14 of the IRR/Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), as amended;

5) The Commission subsequently approved the 11 ICERA applications under ERC Case Nos. 2008-067 RC to 11 January 2010 for the period from December 26, 2008 to July 25, 2009, and 24 ICERA applications under ERC Case No. 2009-037 RC as December 10, 2010 for the period July 26, 2009 to December 25, 2010;

6) On June 3, 2010, NPC-SPUG filed its 1st ICERA application under ERC Case No. 2008-067 RC covering the twelve (12)-month period from December 26, 2008 to December 25, 2009;

7) A Revised Filed on May 30, 2008 its 4th ICERA application under ERC Case No. 2008-067 RC covering the twelve (12)-month period from December 26, 2009 to December 25, 2010;

8) On August 19, 2010, NPC-SPUG filed its 5th ICERA application under ERC Case No. 2008-067 RC covering the twelve (12)-month period from December 26, 2010 to December 25, 2011;

9) A Revised Filed on January 23, 2012 its 6th ICERA application under ERC Case No. 2011-167 RC covering the twelve (12)-month period from December 26, 2011 to December 25, 2012;

10) It is submitting before the Commission its 7th ICERA application covering the period December 26, 2012 to December 25, 2013;

11) It has fully complied with the ICERA monthly reportorial requirements, to support the calculated allowable costs covering the billing periods as evidenced by the submitted reports/compliances duly received by the Commission;

12) It proposes a recovery/refund, the Deferred Accounting Adjustments (DAAs), corresponding to additional costs or savings from foreign exchange fluctuations in the settlement of Debt Service payment requirement portions and Operating Expenses (OPEX), as well as the corresponding carrying charges for the billing periods January to December 2011 into Loans, Groups and Monetary units;

13) Considering the foregoing, and pursuant to all the relevant provisions and criteria issued by the Commission, it has calculated the deferred costs for recovery under the application, comprising of deferred debt service and OPEX, and the corresponding carrying charges for the LUZON, Visayas and Mindanao grids covering the billing period from January 2011 to December 2011, viz:

Total Deferred FOREX Costs, in PhP

Deferred Costs (PhP)	Carrying Charges (PhP)	TOTAL DAA (PhP)
44,156,405	1,091,691	45,248,096

14) The applications under the Commission's approved for the recovery/refund of the above-stated total current deferred FOREX costs for the billing period January 2011 to December 2011 through the imposition of the following proposed rate changes:

Total Deferred FOREX Costs, in PhP/kWh

Deferred Costs (PhP)	Recovery Period	Proposed Rate Impact (PhP/kWh)	ERC Case Nos. (PhP/kWh)
45,248,096	60 months	1.734,070	0.0001

15) It proposes a recovery/refund period of Five (5) years to mitigate the financial impact of the said deferred costs and corresponding to OPEX costs;

16) No additional costs are implementing Rules of the ICERA. A pleased the carrying charge interest rates, in all;

Allowable Carrying Charge Interest Rates

Billing Months	Prevailing 91-day T-Bill Rate, %	Authorized Allowance, %	Allowable Rate
January 2011	4.000%	3.000%	7.000%
February	4.000%	3.000%	7.000%
March	3.990%	3.000%	6.990%
April	4.042%	3.000%	7.042%
May	4.092%	3.000%	7.092%
June	3.933%	3.000%	6.933%
July	3.977%	3.000%	6.977%
August	3.981%	3.000%	6.981%
September	3.967%	3.000%	6.967%
October	3.758%	3.000%	6.758%
November	3.460%	3.000%	6.460%
December	3.775%	3.000%	6.775%

1. Source: Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
2. As authorized in the ICERA Implementing Rules

17) The proposed ICERA DAA is fair and reasonable as it allows the recovery of deferred costs under the ICERA Guidelines and consistent with the corresponding offsets and computations previously made as provided under R.A. 9136;

18) The proposed ICERA was approved for filing by the National Power Board in Resolution No. 2011-63 dated November 23, 2011; and

19) It prays that the Commission to:

a. Approve the deferred cost of PhP45,248,096 and the corresponding proposed ICERA DAA of PhP0.0001/kWh for NPC-SPUG areas;

b. Direct the ICERA refunds to consumers in NPC-SPUG areas, as intended in the ICERA guidelines, and NOT to the Universal Charge for Missionary Electrification (UC-ME). This shall prevent the ICERA from "co-mingling" with the legislated rates (more than the UC-ME under the Department of Energy's Missionary Electrification Development Plan);

c. Allow the continued collection of the ICERA refunds under the terms of periods and rates as previously authorized by the ERC; and

d. Issue a provisional authority for the implementation of this proposed rate and DAA for the immediate recovery of deferred FOREX adjustments within the above proposed five (5) year recovery period.

The Commission has set the instant application for hearing on the following schedules:

Date and Time	Venue	Purpose
	Luzon	
March 28, 2012 (Wednesday) at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 PM)	Pasay City Hotel, Barangay 47, Malibay, Pasay City	Jurisdictional, Expository Presentation, Pre-Trial Conference and Evidentiary Hearings
	Visayas	
April 5, 2012 (Tuesday) at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 PM)	Sandalo Marco Hotel and Convention Center, 191 Sandalo Lane, Diversi, Iloilo City, Philippines	Jurisdictional, Expository Presentation, Pre-Trial Conference and Evidentiary Hearings
	Mindanao	
April 11, 2012 (Wednesday) at two o'clock in the afternoon (2:00 PM)	Marco Polo Hotel, 51 Sr. Pedro Street, Davao City	Jurisdictional, Expository Presentation, Pre-Trial Conference and Evidentiary Hearings

All persons who have an interest in the subject matter of the proceeding may become a party by filing, at least five (5) days prior to the initial hearing and subject to the requirements in the RRO's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a petition/motion with the Commission stating the double number and title of the proceeding and stating: (1) the petitioner's name and address; (2) the nature of petitioner's interest in the subject matter of the proceeding, and the way and manner in which such interest is affected by the issues involved in the proceeding; and (3) a statement of the relief desired.

All other persons who may wish to have a voice in the proceedings may file their oppositions to the petition/motion to intervene or comments on the petition within five (5) days from the date of receipt of the petition/motion to intervene. The petitioner may file its reply to the oppositions/comments, if any, within five (5) days from receipt thereof. The petitioner and intervenors shall submit their memorandum within five (5) days from the last day of the initial hearing. Failure of any party to comply with the above directives shall be a waiver of its right to present evidence and participate in the proceedings.

Written submissions shall be in the form of verified position papers which shall contain the following: (1) a clear statement of the relevant facts; (2) a statement of the issues to be resolved; (3) a statement of the applicable laws and rules; and (4) arguments based on the laws and rules cited, together with the specific evidence supporting the arguments. Only documents submitted and specifically offered as evidence during the hearings shall be admitted and considered by the Commission in rendering its decision. Affidavits submitted in lieu of direct testimonies during the hearings shall be treated as documentary evidence.

Any person may request for leave to intervene in the proceedings and may submit its comments or opposition to the petition. Said request for leave to intervene and comments or opposition to the petition must comply with the requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, specifically Rules 9 and 11 thereof, and must be filed with the Commission and served on the petitioner at least five (5) days before the scheduled initial hearing. Failure to file the request for leave to intervene and comments or opposition to the petition within the prescribed period may be construed as a waiver of the right to intervene and to file comments or opposition to the petition.

Petitioner and any person who has filed a request for leave to intervene and comments or opposition to the petition shall appear at the scheduled hearing. Failure of petitioner to appear shall be a ground for dismissal of the petition. Failure of any person who has filed a request for leave to intervene and comments or opposition to the petition to appear shall be a waiver of the right to present evidence and participate in the proceedings.

Petitioner is directed to cause the publication of this Notice of Public Hearing, at petitioner's expense, once (1) a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Petitioner is directed to furnish each of the Commissioners with a copy of the application with its supporting documents, within three (3) days from the date of publication of this Notice of Public Hearing.

Petitioner is directed to post a copy of this Notice of Public Hearing at the principal office of the Commission at least three (3) days before the scheduled initial hearing.

Petitioner is directed to furnish each of the cities and municipalities in the affected areas with a copy of the application and its supporting documents, within three (3) days from the date of publication of this Notice of Public Hearing.

Petitioner is directed to post a copy of this Notice of Public Hearing at the principal office of the cities and municipalities in the affected areas

"I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me shall live; and whoever lives, believes in Me never dies."
John 11:25-26

His Eminence
Jose T. Card. Sanchez, DD

Passed away peacefully in the grace of our Lord on March 09, 2012 at the age of 81.

The Holy Roman Catholic Church and The Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia and The Diocese of Lucena, his relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at The Dominican Daughters of the Immaculate Mother Chapel until Saturday 5:00 A.M. 10 March 2012 and from then on until the Funeral at the Cathedral-Shrine of the Good Shepherd, Regalado Avenue, Fairview Park, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass will be on Monday, 12 March 2012, at 10:00 A.M. It will be presided by His Eminence Ricardo J. Card. Vidal who will also be the homilist. Afterwards, he will be interred at a tomb specifically prepared for him in the Crypt below the Sanctuary of this Cathedral.

Please omit Flowers! Instead, donate to his favorite concerns: the support of vocations to the Priesthood and/or Consecrated (Religious) Life. Contributions are being accepted at the Parish Office, at the Chancery of this Diocese, and at a designated table within the Cathedral premise. Checks should be payable to RCBN (Roman Catholic Bishop of Novaliches).

Loyola – Commonwealth Inc.

Our Dearly Beloved

JAIME TAGLE SALVADOR

peacefully joined his Creator on March 7, 2012 at the age of 63.

His loving wife **Honorata**,
children **Fred** and **Charlene**,
relatives and friends request prayers
for his eternal rest and everlasting happiness.

His remains lie in state
at the Charity Chapel of Don Bosco Makati
until March 11, 2012.
Thereafter, his remains will be transferred
to lie in state at the Salvador residence
at #458 Barangay Sucad, Apalit, Pampanga
from March 11-14, 2012.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 14, 2012
at the Blue Madonna Memorial Garden
after the 3pm Holy Mass at the St. Peter Parish Church
in San Juan, Apalit, Pampanga.

"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." – John 11:25-26

His Eminence
Jose T. Cardinal Sanchez, DD

Emeritus President of the Congregation for the Clergy,
Emeritus Archbishop of Nueva Segovia and
Emeritus Bishop of Lucena, Quezon,

died in the peace of the Lord on Friday, 9th of March 2012, at Cardinal Santos Hospital at the age of almost 92.

He was born in Pandan, Catanduanes on March 27, 1920 and ordained priest in Naga City on May 20, 1946. He rose from Assistant Pastor of San Raphael Parish, Legazpi City to Vicar General, Diocese of Legazpi. Later on, he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Caceres. He was appointed Bishop of Lucena, then Archbishop of Nueva Segovia. He was appointed Secretary to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and later as Prefect of Congregation for the Clergy on July 1, 1991. Until his death, he resided at the Dominican Daughters of the Immaculate Mother, Commonwealth, Quezon City, in the Diocese of Novaliches.

His remains lie in state at the Dominican Daughters of the Immaculate Mother Chapel until Saturday 5:00 AM, 10 March 2012, and from then on until the funeral at the Cathedral-Shrine of the Good Shepherd, Regalado Ave., Fairview Park, Quezon City.

Funeral Mass before interment will be on Monday, 12 March 2012, at 10:00 A.M. His Eminence Ricardo J. Cardinal Vidal will preside and deliver the homily.

"Come and let us return to the Lord; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up." – Hosea 6:1

CLASSIFIEDS

Model Contracts on PPP for LGUs

DID OF THE RIGHT source for the dollar in the implementation of the Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in the provincial and local level is LGUs question at to how to move forward. There is no single formal document defining all the available modalities and describing the appropriate procedures for PPP in the LGU level.

To address this issue, the Center for Global Best Practices, in collaboration with Pinnacle Solutions, will be launching the first ever public contract, PPP Code for LGUs, Assessed on Friday, March 30, 2012 at the Sofia Manga's in Hotel, Mandaluyong City. Those who will attend the whole day session on this day on the topic "PPP Series II: PPP for LGUs," can get a free copy of the book. This pioneering program is highly recommended for LGUs, National Government agencies, Private Companies who want to participate in PPPs in LGUs, Banks and Financing Institutions, Law Firms, Non-Governmental Organizations, Foundations, Funding and Donor Agencies. The PPP model templates and reports will provide — aligned with the Local Government Code of 1991 — will enable all LGUs in the country to have a comprehensive PPP policy that can test such their aspirations, economic thinking, selection of private sector proponent and implementation of PPP projects. For inquiries, please call Manila here: (+63 2) 556 6566 or 66; overseas (+63 2) 893 7340 or 59; Cebu line: (+63 32) 512 3166 or 67, Baguio line: (+63 74) 423 5146. You may also check details and all other upcoming free practices seminars at www.cgbp.org.

Francois Schuiten has researched, analyzed, and devoted a great amount of time and resources to create the model PPP Code for LGUs. They will unveil all of these valuable information to this one-day session so you don't have to invest and spend months trying to create an effective PPP program for your locality — whether on the provincial, city or municipal levels. Topics will include PPP and Private Sector Participation modalities — Cooperation, Build-Operate-Transfer Scheme, Joint Ventures, Lease and Affermage, Management and Service Contracts, Corporatization, procedures (selected, unsolicited and negotiated) and funding mechanisms (project — finance, equity contributions, loans, and subsidies).

This learning opportunity will be given by Atty. Alberto C. Agra, President of Forensic Law and Policy Strategies (Forensic Solutions), a private think tank offering services in the fields of policy, law reform, advocacy and governance. He is a Certified PPP Specialist (the only one in Southeast Asia and Far East) as confirmed by The Institute of Public-Private Partnerships (IPP) based in Arlington, Virginia, USA. He recently published Knowing PPP 101 and PPP Legal Annotation and has issued 11 policy papers on PPP. He drafted the model PPP Code for LGUs. He has been teaching Law on Public Corporations' (2003) Government for 18 years at the Ateneo de Manila College of Law.

Those who are interested to attend the session are encouraged to avail of the early bird and group discounts. Seats are limited and pre-registration is required. For details, contact program leader Camille Arao.